

The Administration for Children and Families' Office on Trafficking in Persons established the Demonstration Grants to Strengthen the Response to Victims of Human Trafficking in Native Communities (VHT-NC) Program to build, expand, and sustain organizational and community capacity to deliver services to Native American (i.e., American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and/or Pacific Islander) people who have experienced human trafficking. In September 2020, six VHT-NC projects were awarded 3-year grants to provide culturally responsive and trauma-informed participant outreach and identification, comprehensive case management and service provision, and training to respond to human trafficking in their communities. RTI International and American Indian Development Associates are conducting a formative evaluation of these VHT-NC projects.

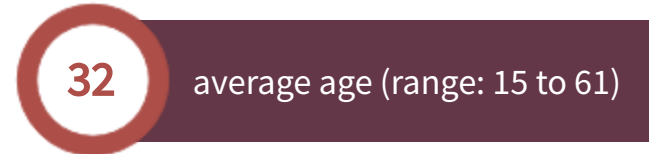
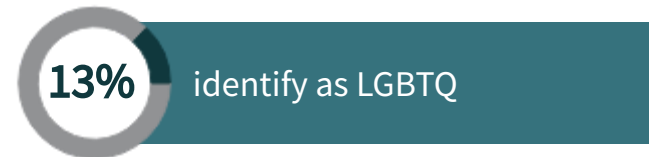
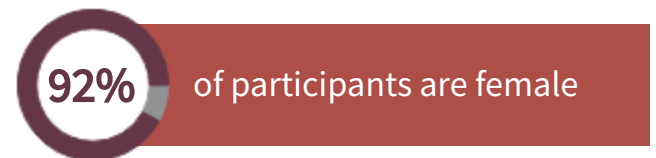
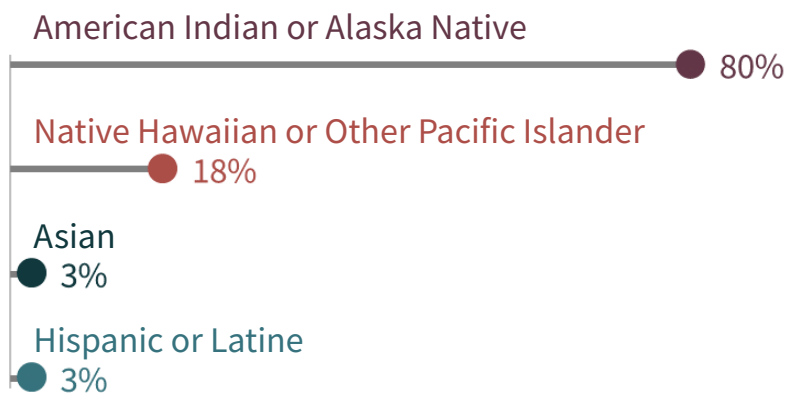
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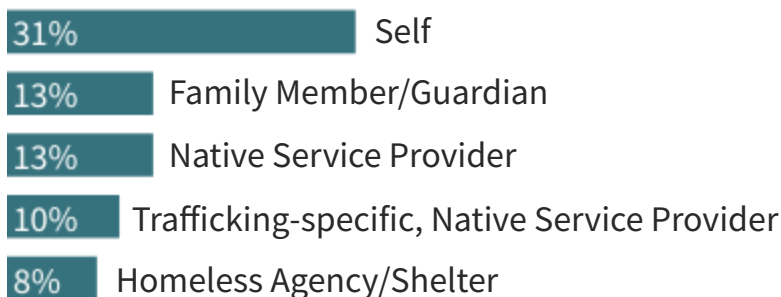
In the VHT-NC Program's first 2 years, **39 participants** have been enrolled **across 4 projects**. This profile describes participant characteristics at intake and service provision through FY2022. Two projects have not yet enrolled participants and all have faced enrollment challenges including, for example, COVID-19 restrictions, low staffing capacity, and the need for improved understanding and awareness of human trafficking.

Demographics



Top 5 Referral Sources

Self-referral is the most common referral pathway to the VHT-NC Program. Project staff also conduct direct outreach in various settings (e.g., street, motels, encampments, partner locations).



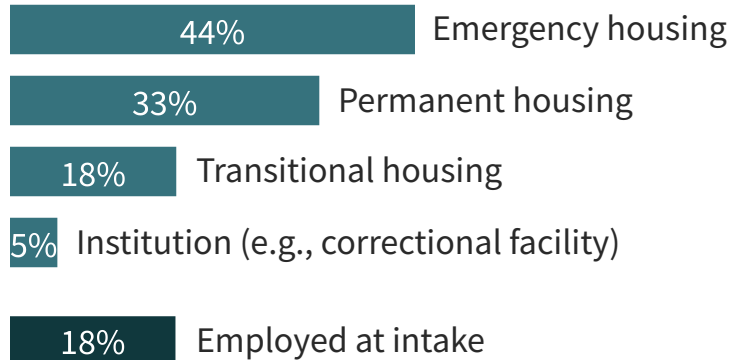
"We have seen a huge increase in self and peer referrals. I think one strength that that highlights, is that community connection and care amongst individuals. Resource sharing amongst the [participants] we're serving, we are seeing a lot, which I think is a huge strength and I always thank [participants] for passing our information along or getting a friend connected."

—Project director

Type of Trafficking Experienced



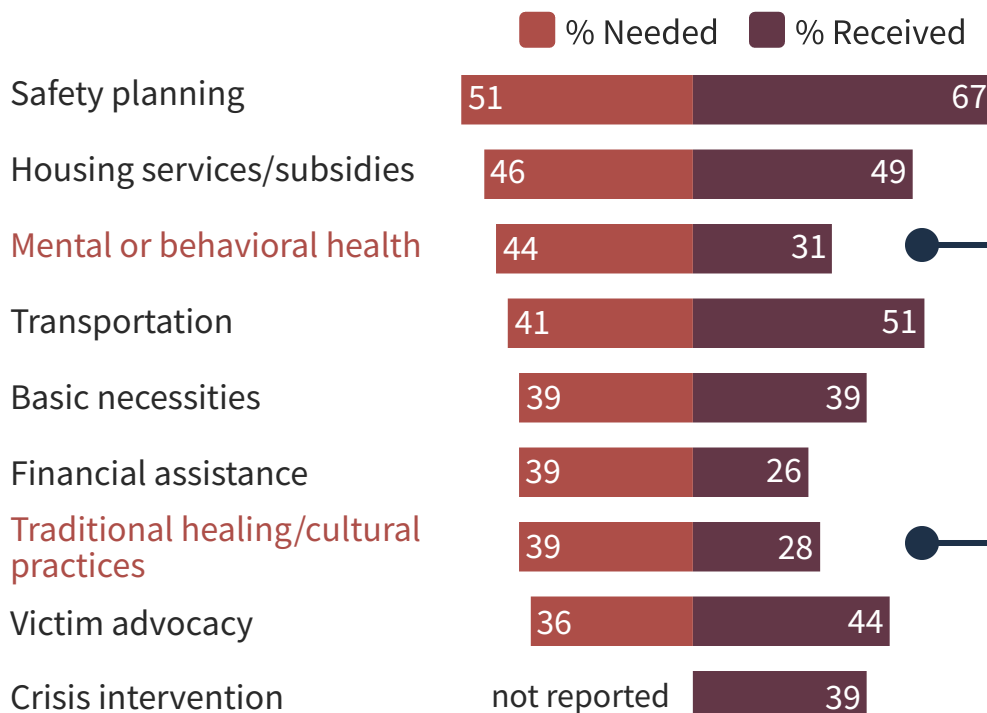
Living Situation & Employment at Intake



"They're not identifying themselves as being trafficked. If you say that to them, they still don't connect it. They're like, 'No, that's not me. No.' So, we're trying to figure out the verbiage to use when working with clients to identify as, like, hey you were a victim of this."
 —Project director describing screening challenges

Needed & Received VHT-NC Services*

Participants' service needs are largely being met. All participants are provided comprehensive case management and assistance through direct service provision or referral. Services that meet immediate needs are often provided first, while longer-term supports may take more time.



Service provision challenges reported by projects:

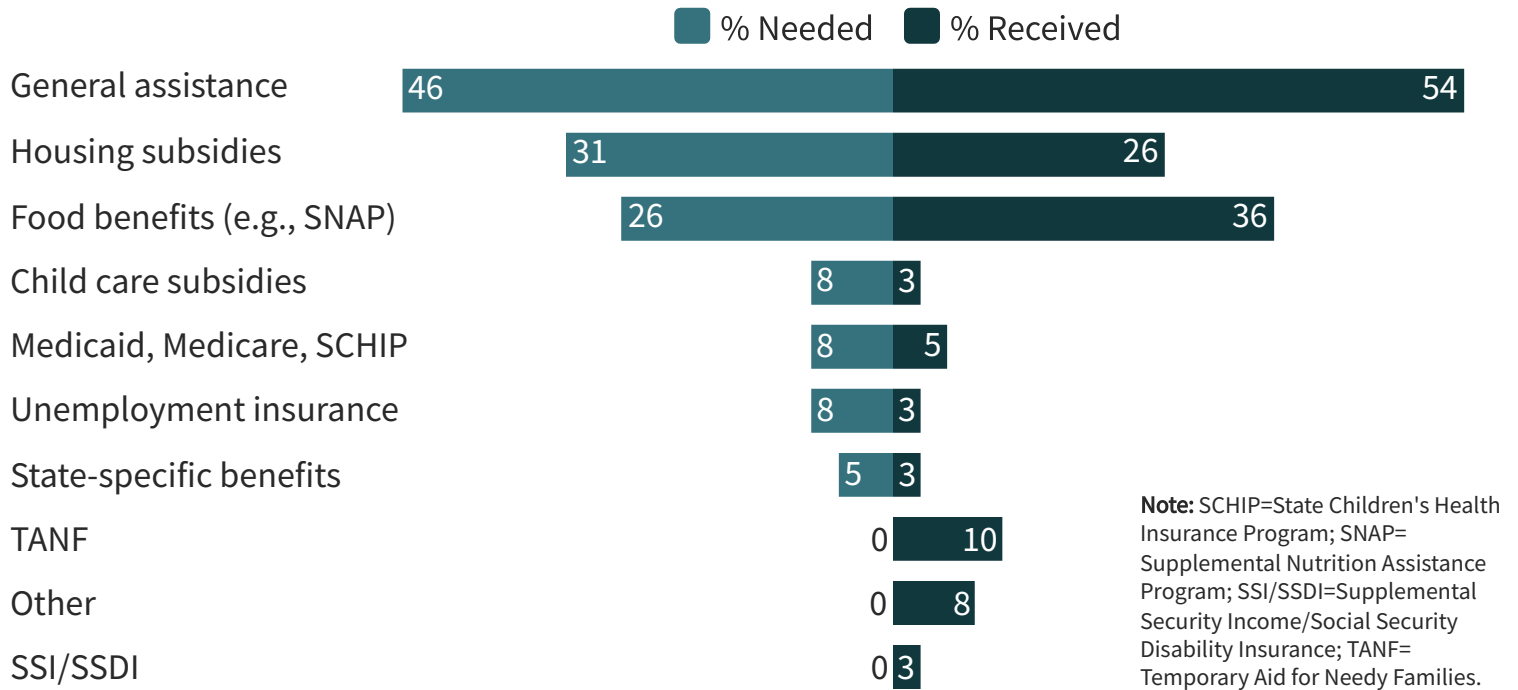
- Identifying **mental/behavioral health** providers who can meet the specific needs of people who have experienced trafficking.
- For non-Native grant recipients, identifying appropriate **traditional/cultural resources** in the community.

Projects are strengthening partner/resource networks to meet these needs.

*Ordered by the top 8 needed services (i.e., services requested by the participant or assessed as being needed by the project) at intake.

Needed & Received Public Benefits*

Participants are receiving needed assistance to obtain public benefits. This often includes help obtaining necessary documents, completing forms, and navigating complex systems.



*Ordered by needed public benefits (i.e., benefits requested by the participant or assessed as being needed by the project) at intake.

This profile was developed as part of the formative evaluation of the VHT-NC Program. Broadly, the goals of the evaluation are to understand the context in which the VHT-NC projects are implemented, the projects' goals, and the paths they take to achieve their goals, using a participatory and culturally responsive approach. The profile draws from quarterly performance data submitted by the VHT-NC projects during FY2021 and FY2022 and from interviews conducted with the VHT-NC project directors.

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The VHT-NC formative evaluation is part of the [Human Trafficking Policy and Research Analyses Project](#), which aims to advance the scope of knowledge and data around human trafficking by identifying priority areas for learning, and conducting a series of studies that can immediately impact practice. All studies are overseen by the ACF Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) in collaboration with OTIP, and conducted by RTI International. The VHT-NC formative evaluation is also conducted in partnership with American Indian Development Associates, LLC.

For additional information about the Human Trafficking Policy and Research Analyses Project or the formative evaluation of the VHT-NC Program, please contact OPRE Project Officers Mary Mueggenborg (Mary.Mueggenborg@acf.hhs.gov) and Kelly Jedd McKenzie (Kelly.McKenzie@acf.hhs.gov) or RTI Project Director Rebecca Pfeffer (rpfeffer@rti.org).

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