

Beyond the Binary:

Addressing Data Gaps and Enhancing
Safety for 2SLGBTQ+ Relatives in the MMIR
Crisis

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Breaking Cycles of Violence Conference

Isleta Resort Hotel & Casino

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Welcome!



**Addressing Data
Gaps and
Enhancing Safety
for 2SLGBTQ+
Relatives in the
MMIR Crisis**



**A Space for
Learning,
Reflection, and
Community**



**Enter with an open
mind, respect, and
willingness to listen.**



**Take Care of
Yourself**

Step out if needed
Engage at your own
pace
Your wellbeing matters



Opening & Kinship



- Yá'át'ééh shik'éeí dóó shidine'ée shi Renae Gray is my name.
- Centering K'ée (kinship) and responsibility to protect all relatives.
- Violence against one relative impacts the entire community.

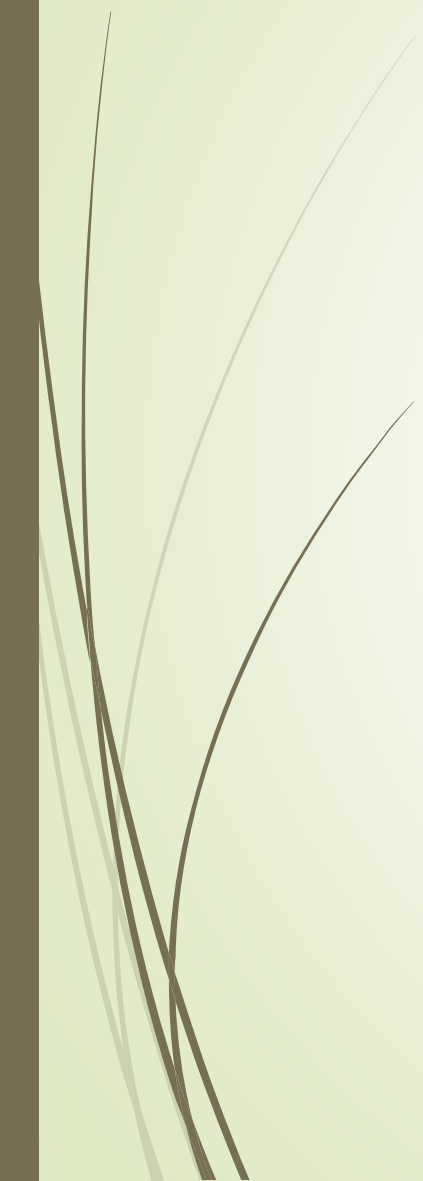


New Mexico Context

- ▶ New Mexico continues to experience high rates of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives.
- ▶ Albuquerque and Gallup identified as hotspots.
- ▶ Data gaps prevent accurate understanding of 2SLGBTQ+ cases.
- ▶ New Mexico has done important work in addressing MMIR, but until our systems include all relatives, especially 2SLGBTQ+ relatives, there are still gaps we must close.



The Data Void

- Many reporting systems only allow Male or Female categories.
 - Two-Spirit and nonbinary relatives are erased in reporting systems.
 - If our systems can only see 'male' or 'female,' then they are not built to protect all our relatives.
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Misgendering & Deadnaming

- Law enforcement and media often rely on legal identification.
- Misgendering and deadnaming can delay investigations and reduce community recognition.
- When a system uses the wrong name, it doesn't just erase identity, it can erase the chance for someone to be found in time.

Intersectionality of Risk

Housing Instability

Healthcare Discrimination

Family Rejection

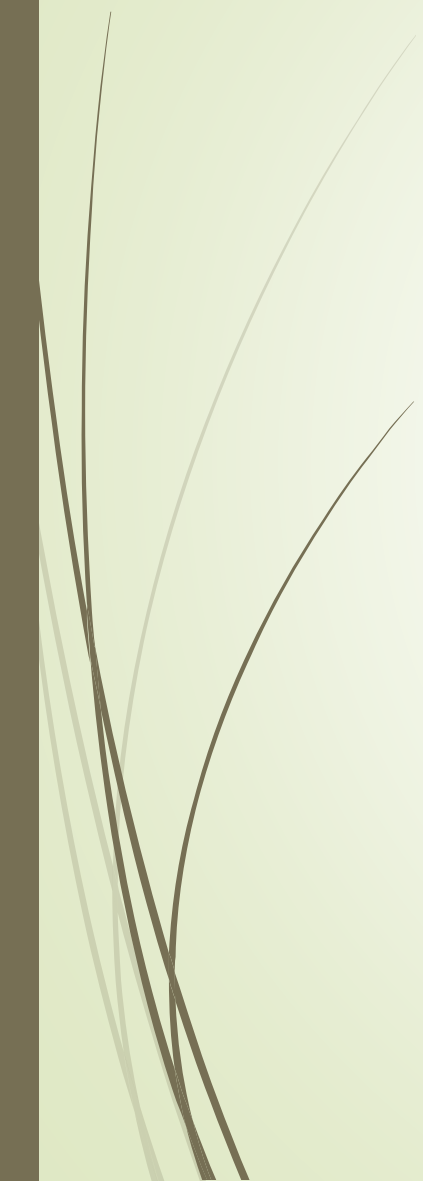
Limited Access to Culturally Competent Services

Increased Vulnerability to Violence





Historical Context

- Many Tribal Nations recognized gender diversity historically.
 - Two-Spirit relatives held roles as healers, leaders, and knowledge keepers.
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Colonial Disruption

Traditional Systems

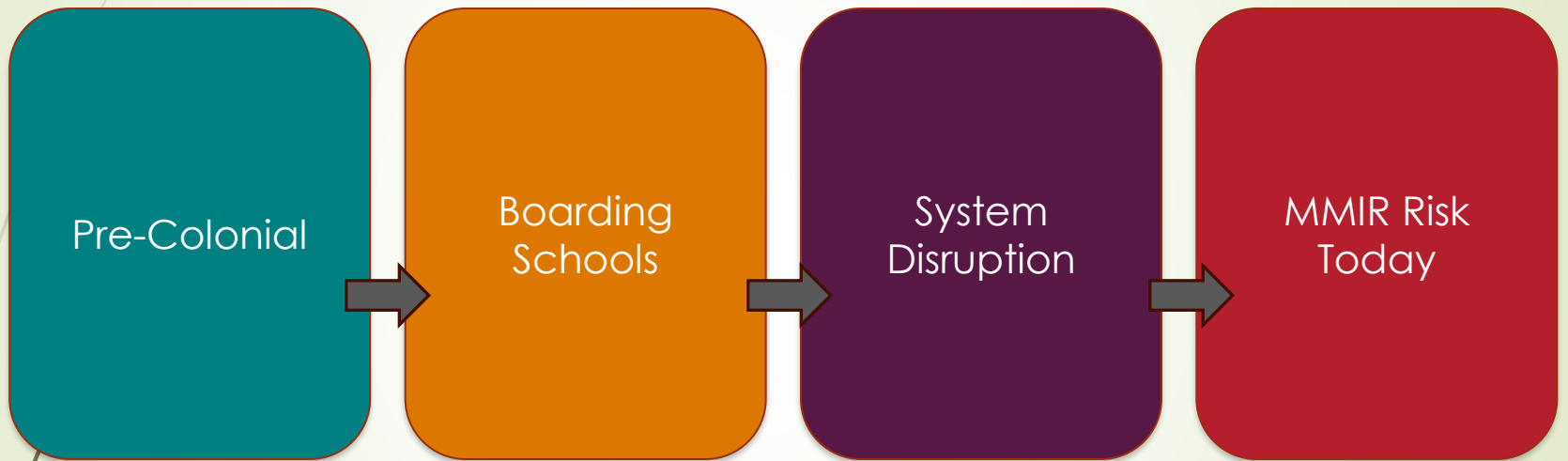
- ✓ Gender diversity recognized
- ✓ Two-Spirit roles honored
- ✓ Healers, leaders, knowledge keepers
- ✓ Kinship-based protection (K'é)

Colonial Systems

- ✗ Gender binary imposed
- ✗ Boarding school enforcement
- ✗ Erasure of identity
- ✗ Disruption of kinship

What was once honored was made invisible, and that invisibility continues to shape outcomes today.

From Disruption to Risk: A Timeline



State Response Plan (2022)

- Objective: Improve data standards and response coordination.
- Opportunity: Expand data collection to include gender diversity.

GAP (Current State)

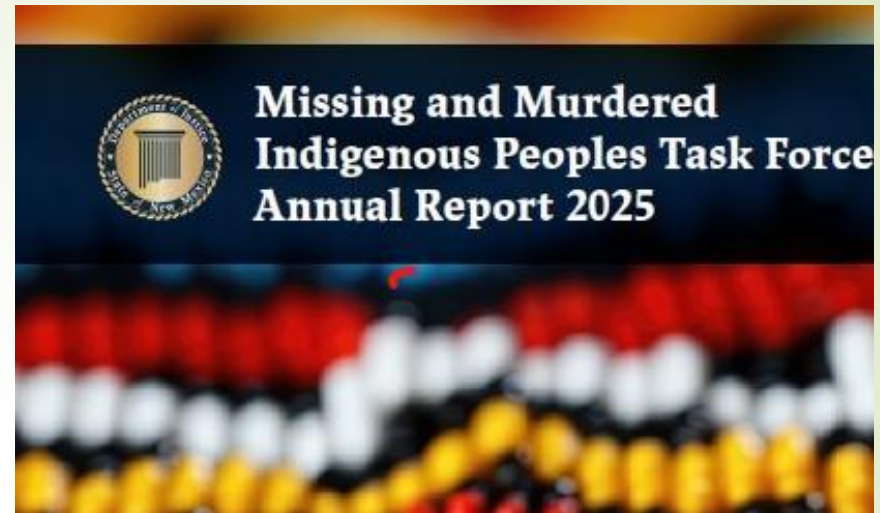
- Binary data fields (Male/Female)
- Misgendering & deadnaming
- Underreporting of 2SLGBTQ+ cases
- Fragmented coordination across agencies
- Delayed recognition & response

OPPORTUNITY (Next Step)

- Add inclusive gender categories
- Capture chosen name + pronouns
- Standardize fields across systems
- Strengthen interagency data sharing
- Faster recognition & coordinated response

MMIWR Task Force Report (2025)

- Findings highlight continuing gaps in data and jurisdictional coordination.
- Undercounting remains a major challenge.



Policy Recommendations

- Expand gender categories in intake forms
- Include chosen name fields
- Improve reporting standards

2SLGBTQ+ Inclusive MMIR Intake & Advocacy Form

Purpose: *To ensure accurate data collection, honor relative identity, and strengthen coordinated community responses.*

Section 1: Identity & Identification

To be filled out using the relative's lived identity to ensure search accuracy.

- **Legal Name (as it appears on ID):** _____
- **Chosen/Authentic Name:** _____
 - *(Note: This is the name that should be used for public flyers and community alerts.)*
- **Pronouns:** They/Them She/Her He/Him Other: _____
- **Gender Identity:**
 - Two-Spirit Transgender Woman Transgender Man Non-Binary/Genderqueer
 - Cisgender Woman Cisgender Man Identity not listed: _____

Training Pipeline: From Policy to Outcomes





Recognizing Chosen Family

LEGAL FAMILY

- Defined by law
- Listed as next-of-kin
- May not know daily life
- May use legal name only

System Default

CHOSEN FAMILY

- Defined by relationship & trust
- Knows routines & networks
- Uses chosen name & identity
- First to notice changes

Community Reality

Protecting All Relatives Require Action

Strengthen Data Systems

- Expand gender categories
- Include chosen names
- Improve reporting

Train Systems

- Cultural humility training
- Ongoing education
- Accountability

Recognize Chosen Family

- Include chosen family
- Update protocols
- Center kinship

Close the Gaps

- Address undercounting
- Improve coordination
- Inclusive response

“If we want different outcomes, we must build systems that truly see all of our relatives.”

Ahéhee'! Thank
you!

Visibility is safety.

When we see all our
relatives, we can protect
all our relatives.

Renaë Gray (Diné)

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