

Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Treatment Court

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Why Try An Alternative Approach to Crime in the Community

- Oyate had one of the highest incarceration rates in SD State pen
- Most of those being incarcerated were young persons who themselves had been the victims of crimes, usually unreported and unprosecuted
- Frustrated with the western criminal justice system as it did not address unresolved trauma in the individual, family or tribe

Our Model for the Treatment Court

- Many who commit crime are the unhealed victims of the past generation
- The Drug Court model is a way to stop crime by healing the perpetrator of crime
- Four phases- Treatment, Aftercare, Healing and Health
- Differs from the AA model because it is not premised on a sickness model but instead a wellness model

What we have learned

- We graduate our victims into criminality too easily in Indian country
- Dealing with Trauma requires understanding of what traumas perpetrators have experienced also
- There has been so much unresolved crime in Indian country that we must focus more on healing the victim than prosecuting the perpetrator