

Kayla Zwicker: A Journey of Truth, Triumph and Tribal Pride

By Josh Murphy, HiSet Diploma Instructor

At 32 years old, Santa Ysabel Iipay Nation tribal member Kayla Zwicker has achieved something she once believed she had already accomplished: earning her high school diploma.

Her path to this milestone has been anything but ordinary, marked by unexpected revelations, unwavering determination, and a deep commitment to honoring her family and her tribe.

Kayla's educational story began more than a decade ago. In 2012, she proudly walked in her high school graduation ceremony—dressed in regalia, surrounded by classmates, and celebrated by loved ones. She believed she had completed all requirements, never imagining that she was actually credit-deficient. For years, she carried the memory of that day as a completed chapter.

Fourteen years later, life looked very different. Kayla was a mother of two girls and newly pregnant with her first son when she began researching career and college options. She was ready to take the next step toward a stable future. But when she applied for state financial aid, she received a shocking notice: she was ineligible because she had never officially graduated.



Kayla Zwicker, left, at her graduation

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In August, Students - and Parents - Get Ready for Back to School

By Gary P. Taylor, for SCTCA TANF

"Let us remember: One book, one pen, one child, and one teacher can change the world."

— Malala Yousafzai

Summer's not over in August.

But for most children, summer vacation is.

Across the nation, students from kindergarten to high school are preparing to go back to school in August. And when those children- including Native Americans- return to school, it's time for new teachers, new classes, new clothes, new friends and new challenges.

But some things remain the same. The new school year requires preparation for not only children but also parents, guardians and family members. There's dozens of things to do, including setting up study times, homework rules, carpools, sleep schedules, proper nutrition, medical appointments, extra-curricular activities- the list goes on and on (see *School sidebars* on pages 4 and 5).

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Cahuilla	Mesa Grande	Santa Ynez
Campo	Morongo	Soboba
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Confused and blindsided, Kayla began investigating. Records she expected to confirm her diploma were missing or unverifiable. The credits she thought she had earned were never completed. The ceremony she had participated in—one she cherished—had not represented an actual graduation. Kayla's shocking discovery was out of a bad dream. But she was definitely awake.

Faced with this truth, Kayla made a choice. Instead of letting disappointment define her, she took control. After enrolling in Southern California Tribal Chairmen's Association (SCTCA) TANF, she started attending Two Directions, Inc. She used the program and its unique partnership with Escondido Adult School to finish what she started. Twenty credits stood between her and her diploma, and she tackled them with the determination of someone who knew exactly what was at stake.

This year, Kayla walked in a graduation ceremony for the second time—but this time, it counted.

With her son born in January and her daughters cheering her on, she crossed the stage not only as a graduate but as a symbol of perseverance. She carried her tribal pride with her, honoring her community and her family with an accomplishment earned through grit and truth.

Now, with her diploma officially in hand, Kayla is fully focused on starting classes in August at Palomar College and the career path ahead. Her educational surprises are behind her, and her future is wide open—shaped by resilience, reclaimed confidence, and the strength of a woman who refused to be defined by the past.

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At Pala Tribal TANF, A Colorful Mural is Painted In the Sunshine of a Summer Day

By Gary P. Taylor, for SCTCA TANF

On the evening of June 23, the maintenance building on the Pala TANF campus blended in with most of the other structures.

Within 24 hours, that had changed completely.

By the end of the day on June 24, across the long side of the building, a colorful spray-painted mural featured the word 'TANF' in large brown and white letters against a backdrop of blue. The painting also included dark brown feathers on the bottom of the letters, contrasting with the bright white at the top of the painting and the word "Tribal" in black.

The mural- designed and painted by the artists Zane Kingcade and New Moon Quis-quis - was a collaboration between the two men. Kingcade is a renowned artist who has painted large murals in Escondido and surrounding areas for decades. Quis-quis, a member of the San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians, is an artist who largely paints abstract works. The two have known each other for years, but it was the first time they have worked together creating a mural at any TANF location.

"We were asked to create a mural for Pala TANF, and we both thought that was a great idea," Quis-quis said. "I love what TANF stands for, and when I called Zane, he was like, "Absolutely. I would love to do this."



From left: Ken Cruse, Matthew Contreras, Zane Kingcade and New Moon Quis-quis

Quis-quis said the fact that the actual work on the TANF building was done in a single day reflects Kingcade's artistic talent.

"To do that in one day- I was amazed," said Quis-quis, who completed the blue background and some of the touch-up on the mural. "But Zane - he's been doing this for so many years, he just started rolling up and finished it all in a day. We just busted it out so fast."

Kingcade - who owns *Street Life* art gallery in Escondido on Grand Avenue- said it took about four hours to complete the mural.

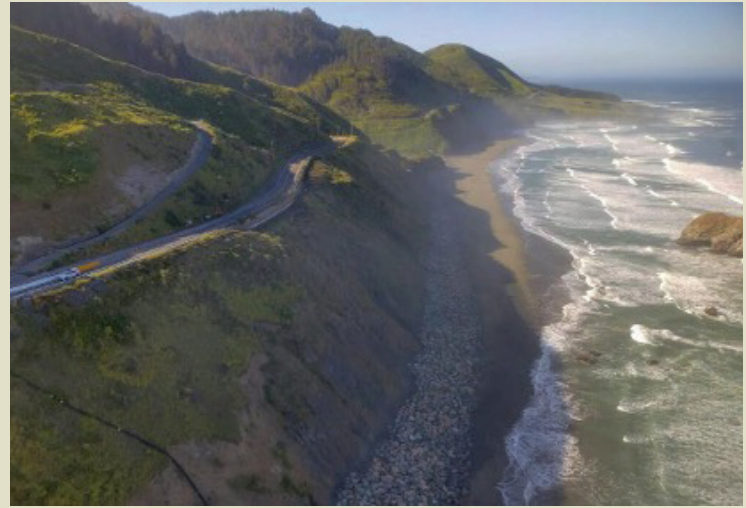
"We started early in the morning and I think we were done by noon," he said. "The mural was about eight feet high and 20 feet wide, so it all went pretty quickly. I like working smarter, not harder."

The only complication was that the surface of the building was corrugated instead of a flat surface, Kingcade said. "The surface was in and out, in and out, nothing flat," he noted. "That can create more difficulty and it takes a little more time. You don't want to overspray (the paint) on the surface."

The mural contains several different colors- red, brown, yellow, turquoise, white- and a style of lettering that gives it "a Native vibe," Kingcade said. "We thought this would be perfect for TANF."

Since the mural was completed, many TANF employees and their friends have taken pictures in front of the now colorful building exterior, said Matthew Contreras, Lead Maintenance at Pala TANF.

— DISPATCHES — CALIFORNIA



Blues Beach in Mendocino County Photo by Caltrans

For the first time in the history of the state, land is being returned to Native American tribes previously managed by Caltrans (California Department of Transportation).

And it's not just any piece of land.

Caltrans announced in early July that "California is returning a stretch of rugged Mendocino County coast to the Indigenous nations whose ancestors once stewarded its shores," according to the Los Angeles Times. The state agency approved the transfer of Blues Beach and the surrounding bluffs to Kai Poma, a nonprofit founded by representatives of the Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo Indians, Round Valley Indian Tribes and Coyote Valley Band of Pomo Indians. The transfer totals 136 acres, including a scenic stretch along Highway 1 in Northern California just above the Pacific Ocean.

As noted in the Times: "*The effort to acquire the land took years — and required a change in state law. Caltrans lacked the ability to transfer land to tribal governments until 2021, when Gov. Gavin Newsom signed a bill sponsored by state Sen. Mike McGuire (D-Healdsburg) that enabled the transfer, according to a news release issued at the time. The law also bars commercial activity on the property and requires public access to be maintained.*"

J. Carlos Rivera, Tribal Chairman of the Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo Indians, said the transfer is "enormous from our tribal perspective that we are basically obtaining the land that our people once lived on before colonization."

Rivera said the tribe considers the property a sacred site. The coastal waters are used by tribal people for seaweed and abalone gathering, and the shores host youth cultural camps, he told the Times. "Protecting the land, it has a deeper meaning for us because we're connected to the land."

— Gary P. Taylor

(Continued from bottom of page 1)

What may be the most important thing about getting back to school, though, is obvious: learning. But for Native American children, learning- and the way they are taught- can be different than it is for non-Natives.

Stephanie Fryberg, a Tulalip tribal member, graduated with a Ph.D from Stanford more than two decades ago. She taught American Indian Studies at the University of Arizona and was a professor in the Department of Psychology.

Twelve years ago, she spoke at a National TANF Institute Conference at the Pala Resort and Casino. What she said then about Native American children and education remains insightful and relevant now. Some excerpts:

"We need to acknowledge there is an education gap among Native American children. Why is that? Is it that Native Americans can't learn or won't learn? No - it's that Native Americans learn in different ways. Learning is incremental. Native American children understand that instinctively.

"When we tell children, 'You're smart,' they tend not to work as hard on their studies. But if you tell children, 'You need to work harder in this area to raise your grades,' you encourage them and you make it clear they can improve if they work on it. We can instill a growth mindset.

"Our children don't fail the system. It's the system that fails them."

Fryberg - who has five children - noted it was important for parents to inspire their kids so they can begin to believe in themselves. She said they could do that by teaching children about their Native American culture, traditions and references as part of their overall education. Such an academic emphasis can markedly improve Native American students' across a wide range of subjects, Fryberg said.

Some elementary schools in various states have implemented this emphasis on aspects of Native American culture in the classroom. And the academic performance of American Indian students improved significantly, she noted.

So as Native American children return to school in this new academic year, they will encounter some things that could prove difficult- whether academic, emotional, or social. But what Fryberg said all those years ago could help parents

prepare their children for the new school year in ways that bring families together.

Whether a child is Native American or non-Native, there are some things that are effective in preparing them for the new school year. The following are some tips to prepare children who are going back to school:



BACK TO SCHOOL: HOMEWORK TIPS AND STRATEGIES

- From the Liberty Valley Intermediate website

Over the years, research and studies have shown that when parents become involved in their children's schoolwork, the children do better in school. This is especially true for younger students. One way parents, guardians or any adult family member can get involved is by helping your child with homework. Here are 10 tips and strategies:

1. Keep in touch with the teacher or teachers to be fully aware of the quantity and the quality of the homework turned in.

2. Set a schedule, including both a beginning and an ending time. Most kids need some time to unwind after school before they tackle their homework. Doing it too close to bedtime may make it difficult due to fatigue. Fridays are usually the best day for homework that must be completed over the weekend. Assignments are still fresh in mind and last minute panic rushes are avoided.

3. Encourage your child to divide the homework assignment into "What I can do myself" and "What I need help with." You should help only with that part of the homework your child cannot do independently, such as using flashcards, practicing spelling tests, and clarifying assignments. This builds responsibility and independence in your child.

4. Hold off on watching TV (and any other screen time) until homework is completed.

5. Provide a home study center for your child with adequate light and few distractions. If your child concentrates better with "white noise" such as music, allow that.

6. Use direct praise for doing the homework and even more for accomplishment. "You've spelled 18 out of 20 words correctly--that's the best you've done this semester!"

7. Be available when your child is doing homework, so that you can answer a question if there is confusion. If possible, it is better for you to be in another room, so you are easily accessible and yet not a distraction.

8. Look over the homework when it is completed. If you make any corrections it is helpful for the teacher to see the patterns of errors.

9. Study groups are often a good strategy. Your child may benefit from studying with one or two classmates. However, make sure they are using the time to study.

10. Allow bathroom, drink, and/or snack breaks - even a little outside walk - but insist on completion of the homework task.



1. Reset Sleep Schedules

Adjust bedtimes and wake-up times gradually (e.g., shifting them by 15 minutes every few days) one to two weeks before school starts so your child's body clock naturally adapts to the academic routine.

2. Complete Health & Wellness Checkups

Schedule necessary physicals, dental cleanings, and eye exams to ensure your child's health is on track. Check in with the school nurse to review allergy policies or medication plans if required.

3. Practice the Morning and Commute Routine

Practice the morning routine—getting dressed, eating breakfast, and brushing teeth—on school timelines. If your child is taking a new bus or walking, do a practice run to the stop or building.

4. Involve Kids in Shopping

Let your children help pick out their supplies, backpack, and first-day outfits. Giving them choices empowers them and builds enthusiasm for the new year.

5. Build Independence

Practice self-help skills suitable for your child's age, such as tying shoes, opening lunchbox containers, and packing and unpacking their own bags.



BACK TO SCHOOL: PREPARING BEFORE THE FIRST WEEK

With so many things to prepare for as the new school year begins, not everything has to wait until the first day. For parents and guardians, completing even a few tasks before the first week of classes can be important before the new year starts. The following suggestions on the *Family Mercy* website are from Amanda Deacy, Ph.D in Child Psychology and Pediatric Gastroenterology, and Emily Thorpe, M.Ed:

- **Before and after school care.** If your child is going to need one or both, get a head start on figuring it out.
- **Print out the lunch menu.** Once you have that first lunch menu, print it out and put it somewhere where you, and your kids, can always see it. This will make the routine of either packing a lunch every morning or getting a hot lunch that much easier.
- **Put money in your kid's lunch accounts.** If your kids will be buying lunch from school, make sure they have money on their lunch card so you don't get the dreaded call in the middle of the day that first week.
- **Figure out carpools.** You may already know if you'll be carpooling to and from school or after-school activities, but this is a great time to confirm plans and make sure your children know them, too.
- **Make sure your kids have important phone numbers memorized.** Yes, there are cell phones, and it is possible for someone to look these up, but in case of an emergency make sure your kids have the numbers of their trusted adults memorized. Practice once a day for the week leading up to school.
- **Remind them of their trusted adults.** If you won't be picking your kids up from school every day, go over who trusted adults are that can pick them up, as well as a code word *that only someone you gave permission to pick them up could tell them*. If your kids' names are on their backpacks or anything else that could be used to identify them, an adult just knowing their name isn't enough to be able to tell that they are trusted. Play it safe and come up with a code word or phrase.
- **Add important dates to your calendar.** Slot in things like events, half days, etc. You don't want to be the reason your kids miss out on something. Make sure any partners or co-parents or trusted family members also have these dates and have them in their calendars as well.
- **Consider filling out a release of information.** If there is any pertinent information to your child's care while they are at school, consider being proactive and filling a release of information out and providing it to your school nurse or child's medical team before the first week of school.



BACK TO SCHOOL: SUPPORTING NATIVE AMERICANS IN COLLEGE

It's not only young Native American children getting ready to go back to school.

Across the country, American Indians in their teens are returning to high school or even getting ready for college. Nizhóní Begay, a Stanford graduate and member of the Navajo Nation, is doing what she can to create a path to college for Native Americans. The following is an excerpt from an article in *Running Strong for American Indian Youth*:

Nizhóní Begay, 26, is a scholar, role model, and philanthropist from the Navajo Nation. Being the only Indigenous student at her high school, Nizhóní often felt intimidated by the absence of Indigenous representation in higher education and frustrated by the lack of available pathways to Native students. Inspired by her own experience, Nizhóní graduated from Stanford and is now leveraging her knowledge and experience to create a path for Native American students to thrive. Already, Nizhóní's program is bringing confidence and college readiness to students across Indian Country.

Nizhóní's Dreamstarter Project "*Pathways: College Readiness and Career Exploration for Native Youth*" is making a big impact on Native students, from inspiring middle and high schoolers to supporting college transfer students. As grants and events manager at the Lindy Waters III Foundation, Nizhóní is using her connections to maximize her reach and impact. So far, she's created engaging online and digital resources to support and encourage students.

...A major success of her program has been providing professional headshots to students. Having professional-grade photos taken not only boosted the students' confidence, it is also sure to set them apart as they apply for colleges and careers.

In November 2025, Nizhóní's Pathways project was able to host 60 Native students and their families for a college tour to Oklahoma State University. Along with a tour of the college and facilities, students and families got to experience lunch on campus, and attend a college-level basketball game, showing students what's in store for them with both academic and campus life. With one successful college tour complete, Nizhóní is excited to bring more students into her programming and is planning an additional tour to her alma mater, Stanford, next fall.

With more than 125 students already served through Nizhóní's Dreamstarter Project, we are inspired by the impact and support the "Pathways" project and the Lindy Waters III Foundation are making with Native students. We are excited to support the next college tour, and even more excited to see the first of her Pathways students graduate.



Nizhóní Begay, center, with two Native American students

6. Discuss What to Expect

Talk about what a typical day will look like. Discuss their fears, help them formulate goals, and normalize any anxieties they might have about new teachers or social situations.

7. Set Up a Homework Station

Designate a quiet, well-lit, and distraction-free area in your home stocked with essential tools (pencils, paper, calculators) for studying and homework.

8. Plan Healthy Lunches and Snacks

Practice packing and eating school-style lunches. Involve your kids in selecting the fruits, vegetables, and snacks they will enjoy to ensure they actually eat what you pack.

9. Arrange Social Reconnections

Help set up playdates or meetups with classmates before the first bell. Reconnecting with familiar faces eases the transition into the new school year.

10. Limit Screen Time

Start transitioning away from late-night summer screen habits. Establish rules for unplugging in the evening to improve sleep quality and focus in the classroom.



BACK TO SCHOOL: NATIVE AMERICAN QUOTES ON CHILDREN

Nothing belongs to you of what there is, of what you take you must share.

Touch a child—they are my people.

The sunlight does not leave its marks on the grass. So we, too, pass silently.

Many shores I have sailed to in my canoe,

Often against strong winds.

Choose the tree well, my brother,

If it is to carry you to distant shores.

If the very old will remember, the very young will listen...

- *My Heart Soars*, by Chief Dan George

Even the seasons form a great circle in their changing, and always come back again to where they were. The life of a person is a circle from childhood to childhood, and so it is in everything where power moves.

- *Black Elk*, Oglala Lakota

Training began with children who were taught to sit still and enjoy it. They were taught to use their organs of smell, to look where there was apparently nothing to see, and to listen intently when all seemingly was quiet. A child who cannot sit still is a half-developed child.

- *Luther Standing Bear*, Lakota

Treat the earth well: it was not given to you by your parents, it was loaned to you by your children. We do not inherit the Earth from our Ancestors; we borrow it from our Children.

- *Native American Proverb*

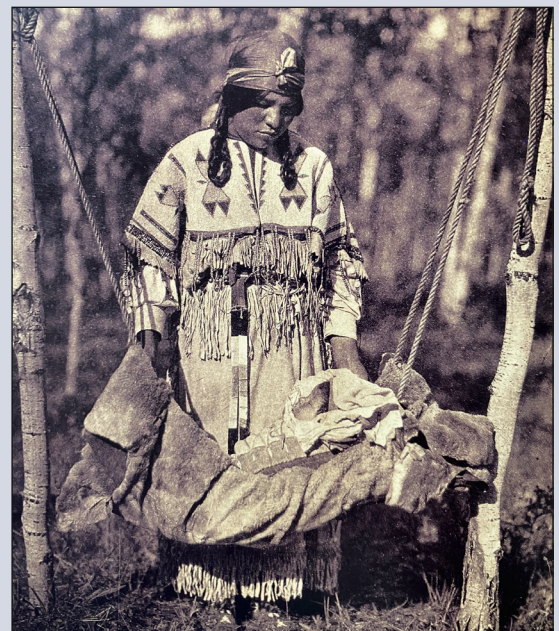
It was our belief that the love of possessions is a weakness to be overcome. Its

appeal is to the material part, and if allowed its way, it will in time disturb one's

spiritual balance. Therefore, children must early learn the beauty of generosity.

They are taught to give what they prize most, that they may taste the happiness of giving.

- *Ohiyesa*, Lakota



At Pala Tribal TANF Workshop, Participants Engage With *Healing the Spirit, Calming the Mind*

By Cyndie Gilliam, LMFT TANF Therapist

In the first week of June, Southern California Tribal Chairmen's Association (SCTCA) Tribal TANF participants engaged in a workshop entitled *Healing the Spirit, Calming the Mind*.

The workshop was held June 2 and June 4 at the Pala Tribal TANF campus. The two sessions - led by Cyndie Gilliam, LMFT Tribal TANF Therapist - included eight participants in Pala and on ZOOM sessions.

The purpose of the workshop was to increase Tribal TANF participants' awareness of stress, provide practical stress management tools, and encourage healthy self-care practices that support emotional, mental, and physical well-being. Participants learned to define stress and understand how it affects the body, mind, emotions, and daily functioning. They were able to identify personal stress signals and recognize at least two signs or symptoms of stress in their own lives. The workshop also explored the importance of self-care and clarified the difference between practicing self-care and being selfish. Participants gained a deeper understanding of how self-care supports overall wellness, resilience, and long-term emotional health.

A key component of the workshop involved creating a personalized self-care plan that Tribal TANF participants can continue to use in the future. There was also a discussion of the benefits of developing a stress/self-care bag containing comforting, grounding, and supportive items that can be easily accessed during times of stress or emotional overwhelm.

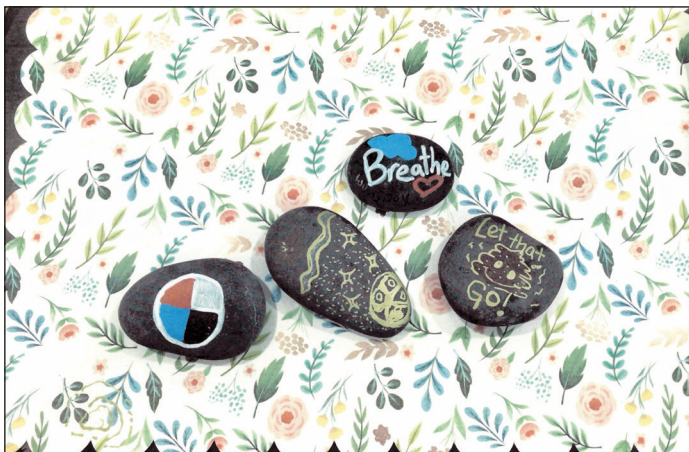
Participants also learned and practiced several practical coping strategies, including breathing exercises, grounding techniques, healthy boundary-setting skills, and the use of music as a tool for relaxation and emotional regulation. These activities were designed to help participants build confidence and strengthen coping abilities. They also included healthy stress-management tools to add to their personal wellness toolbox.

Participants attended the in-person workshop at the Pala Tribal TANF office. Participants actively engaged in the activities and reported particularly enjoying the breathing exercises and discussions on healthy boundaries. One participant shared: "I am capable of creating and maintaining my peace of mind."

Other Tribal TANF participants attended the Zoom workshop sessions. Participants were interactive and engaged in discussions. They also actively participated throughout the sessions. One participant shared a picture of a gourd she painted following the workshop, incorporating the stress-management tools and coping strategies she had learned. This creative expression demonstrated her understanding of the material and her commitment to applying the skills in her daily life.

Feedback from participants reflected an increased understanding of stress management and self-care. One participant stated, "I can manage stress in healthy ways because stress is a part of life so it's important to live in balance with it." Another participant shared, "I can manage my stress by taking care of myself and my needs."

Overall, the workshop successfully met its objectives by increasing participants' knowledge of stress and self-care, strengthening coping skills, and empowering participants to develop healthy strategies for managing stress and supporting their overall well-being.



Pechanga Studios and Boardwalk Pictures Complete Historical Native American Series, *'People of the West'*

By Gary P. Taylor, for SCTCA TANF



An actor portrays Denis Turner in an episode from *'People of the West.'*

Nearly 60 years ago, a young Denis Turner joined the Native American occupation of Alcatraz Island across from San Francisco.

At the time, he was a college student at UC Santa Cruz. But he headed north to join the group of Native Americans who had occupied the abandoned federal prison in 1969 in protest of U.S. government policies and treatment of Indians.

Turner- now the Executive Director of Southern California Tribal Chairmen's Association (SCTCA)- recalled his arrival.

"It was late at night, completely dark, and a few of us had this small boat and we really couldn't see much of anything," Turner told a group of college students at a film festival some 50 years later. "I remember it was cold, and the water was choppy. When we got close to Alcatraz, we jumped out of the boat and made it onto the island."

Turner joined what would later become one of the most famous Native American protests against the American government- one that lasted nearly two years.

The occupation of Alcatraz is featured in one of the episodes of a new series called *'People of the West,'* a history of California's treatment of Native Americans. The 10-part series "traces 500 years of oppression, genocide, survival, resilience, and cultural rebirth in California," noted *Indian Country Today*. (In one of the pictures promoting the series, an actor portraying Turner can be seen altering a federal prison sign inside Alcatraz with red paint to read "Indian Land.")

The recently completed series was created by Brad Munoa, *Payómkawichum*, a Pechanga Band of Indians tribal member who is also the executive producer. He is the director of Pechanga Studios, which co-produced the series with Boardwalk Pictures. The episodes "use oral

storytelling, cinematic dramatization, archival material, and expert testimony to trace five centuries of how California tribes were affected by colonizers who came by sea and by land. Its wealth of natural resources — gold, fish, crops, minerals, and water — made it a last frontier on the push for western expansion," noted *Indian Country Today*.

The series features many familiar Indigenous actors including David Midthunder who is Hunkpapa Lakota, Gene Brave Rock who is Blackfoot from Canada, and Montana Cypress of Miccosukee.

Munoa, said the idea for the series came from watching his own children inherit the same incomplete and romanticized version of California history he grew up with.

"What happened to Native Americans wasn't a genocide," Munoa told *Indian Country Today*. "That's absolutely not true. You are the survivors of the Holocaust. They call that expansion for civilization or manifest destiny, but it was extermination. *'People of the West'* is a 10-part docuseries that tells the history of California, but from the Native perspective. So this is going to be all the things that they have whitewashed out of the school system, and they don't teach you. We try to shed a light on that...What we did was we created something that educators could use out of the box. Not only is it a series, not only is it epic and beautiful, but we also wrote a 155-page curriculum with lesson plans and lectures and all these materials that teachers need," Munoa said.

He believes the series - which was filmed throughout California - is more than just a story about "carnage and bloodshed and genocide." In Munoa's view, it's really a story of resistance and survival and cultural renewal. As noted in *Indian Country Today*:

"Tribes were strategic and they weren't just passive observers of history. They didn't just let this all happen. They strategized. They met. They had democracies and they had to decide one of three things. Do we fight? Do we run away and hide? Or do we join and try to work together?" he said. "We exist today and I just have to thank the ancestors for trudging through that terrible time and grinding out an existence to survive so that we could all still be here today."

The series is aligned with California's Ethnic Studies and History, Social Science standards and is designed as a teaching resource for middle school through college classrooms. Each lesson plan encourages critical thinking, cultural understanding, and engagement with California's Native history through storytelling, discussion, and reflection. The series is expected to carry a PG-13 rating, according to *Indian Country Today*.



Building Bonds That Last: Talking with Your Children in Meaningful Ways



Every child wants to feel seen, heard, and understood by the adults who care for them. Communication is more than words—it's the tone we use, the attention we give, and the empathy we show. When children feel safe expressing their thoughts and emotions, they are more likely to open up, trust, and grow. As parents and caregivers, the way we communicate can either build bridges or create distance—making it one of the most important skills we can develop.

Active Listening

At its core, effective communication begins with listening. Active listening means giving your child your full attention—putting down distractions, making eye contact, and being fully present in the moment. When children feel genuinely heard, they are more likely to open up and share their thoughts and feelings. Simple responses like, “It sounds like that really upset you,” or “Tell me more about what happened,” can go a long way in helping children feel understood.

The way we speak to children is just as important as how we listen. Using clear, simple, and age-appropriate language helps children better understand expectations and guidance. Long lectures or harsh tones can often lead to frustration or shutdown. Instead, calm and respectful communication models the behavior we want to see. Children are always watching—and learning from—how adults respond in moments of stress.

What We Say

Validate Emotions

Another key element is validating your child's emotions. This doesn't mean you have to agree with everything they say or do, but it does mean acknowledging their feelings without judgment. When a child hears, “I can see why you feel that way,” they learn that their emotions matter. This builds emotional awareness and helps children develop healthy ways to express themselves.

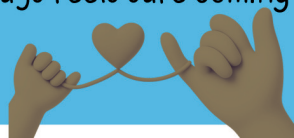
Creating consistent moments of connection each day can make a significant difference. Even setting aside five to ten minutes for a daily check-in allows children to share their experiences, joys, and challenges. Asking open-ended questions like, “What was the best part of your day?” or “Was anything difficult today?” encourages meaningful conversation and helps strengthen your bond over time.

Moments of Connection

Communication Barriers

It's also important to recognize common communication barriers. Yelling, interrupting, dismissing feelings, or overreacting can cause children to shut down or become reluctant to share. While no parent or caregiver is perfect, being mindful of these habits and making small adjustments can greatly improve the quality of your interactions.

Building better communication with your child doesn't happen overnight—it's a daily practice rooted in patience, presence, and care. Every small effort to listen, understand, and connect makes a lasting impact. As parents and caregivers, you don't have to be perfect; you just have to be present. Remember, the goal isn't just to be heard—it's to build a relationship where your child always feels safe coming to you.



If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further please contact Cyndie Gilliam LMFT TANF Therapist

@ 760-330-3913 or cgilliam@sotca.net



***Scan the QR code to view current SCTCA Tribal TANF
Contractor Class Schedules and Calendars.
Schedules include training offered through our approved contractors.
Schedules are updated monthly.***



Commodity Distribution Schedule August 2026

USDA FOOD DISTRIBUTION SCHEDULE FOR AUGUST 2026

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>TIME</u>
AUG 4 TH , TUESDAY	CAMPO	10 AM – 12 PM
AUG 6 TH , THURSDAY	SAN PASQUAL	8 AM – 12 PM
AUG 10 TH , MONDAY	LOS COYOTES LA JOLLA	9 AM – 10 AM 11 AM – 12 PM
AUG 12 TH , WEDNESDAY	RINCON	8 AM – 12 PM
AUG 13 TH , THURSDAY	PECHANGA PAUMA	9 AM – 10 AM 11 AM – 12 PM
AUG 17 TH , MONDAY	PALA	9 AM – 11 AM
AUG 19 TH , WEDNESDAY	MANZANITA OLD CAMPO	930 AM – 1030 AM 11 AM – 12 PM
AUG 24 TH , MONDAY	VIEJAS BARONA	9 AM – 10 AM 11 AM – 12 PM
AUG 25 TH , TUESDAY	MESA GRANDE SANTA YSABEL	9 AM – 10 AM 11 AM – 12 PM

OFFICE CLOSURES: NONE

A HOUSEHOLD CANNOT PARTICIPATE IN THE FOOD COMMODITY PROGRAM IF THEY ARE ON THE CALFRESH (FOOD STAMPS) PROGRAM. YOU CAN PARTICIPATE IN ONLY ONE OF THE ABOVE PROGRAMS.

WRONG INFORMATION ON APPLICATION, DUAL PARTICIPATION IN BOTH PROGRAMS, OR RECEIVING COMMODITIES COULD BE A BASIS FOR DISQUALIFICATION FROM THE FOOD COMMODITY PROGRAM.
IF YOU DO NOT PICK UP ON YOUR SCHEDULED RESERVATION DAY, YOU MUST MAKE AN APPOINTMENT TO PICK UP AT THE WAREHOUSE. CALL OUR OFFICE FOR AN APPOINTMENT. (760) 749-5608



Coming in September:

- National Recovery Month
- Family Health and Stability
- TANF Back to School Events

**SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
TRIBAL CHAIRMEN'S ASSOCIATION**
Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
P.O. Box 1470 Valley Center, Ca 92082

