Native American adolescent girls are frequent victims of sexual, physical, and emotional violence. They suffer from substance abuse, sexually transmitted infections, and unintended pregnancies at a rate that is two to four times higher than that of other racial and ethnic groups in the United States. Despite the high need for services, residents of rural communities have fewer health resources than their counterparts in cities and towns. The use of targeted health promotion technologies is one proven method to bridge the services gap, and studies conducted by Johns Hopkins indicate that these adolescents are open to receiving information and interventions through smartphone platforms.

To address this pervasive health equity problem, the Johns Hopkins Alliance for a Healthier World (AHW) awarded $250,000 to a research team led by the JHU Center for American Indian Health that will design a new mobile application called “Safe Passage” to provide information about sexual and reproductive health to adolescent girls from the Sioux and Assiniboine nations on the Fort Peck reservation in Montana and from the White Mountain Apache Tribe in Arizona.

The app will integrate functions such as a rescue-call button, a link to local case managers, and additional health information for the adolescent girls.

More than 90 percent of the girls in the target areas own smartphones, and the app will also be accessible via computers at schools and community centers.
The project employs the key AHW approaches of Female-led innovation, Global to Local Learning, and Open Science.

The app is being designed by a faculty member from the Johns Hopkins Whiting School of Engineering, who is working closely with the girls and the nations’ leaders in order to make sure the application will be optimized for Native American adolescents.

The Alliance foresees enormous potential for the Safe Passage app to be customized for local settings around the world.

Collaboration Across Sectors

Our Safe Passage team includes researchers and students from three schools at JHU: Public Health, Nursing, and Engineering. We are proud to in partnership with the Assiniboine, White Clay and White Mountain Apache tribes.

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**THE ALLIANCE IN ACTION: RECENT IMPACT GRANTS FOR HEALTH EQUITY WORK**

**GENDER EQUITY & JUSTICE**

**TRANSFORMATIVE TECHNOLOGIES & INSTITUTIONS**

Promoting Safe Passage from Adolescence to Adulthood for Native American Women

Public Health, Nursing, Engineering

AMERICAN INDIAN NATIONS

**FOOD & NUTRITION SECURITY**

**GENDER EQUITY & JUSTICE**

**TRANSFORMATIVE TECHNOLOGIES & INSTITUTIONS**

ADHINCRA Study: ADDressing Hypertension in Africa

Nursing, Medicine, Arts & Sciences

GHANA

**HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS**

**TRANSFORMATIVE TECHNOLOGIES & INSTITUTIONS**

Testing a thermal cooker to reduce household air pollution and make cooking with LPG affordable and sustainable

Public Health, Medicine, Engineering, Business

PERU

**INDIA**

Transformative Technologies for Zero TB in Tibetan Kids

Medicine, Nursing, Public Health, Business, Education, Arts & Sciences

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**ABOUT JOHNS HOPKINS ALLIANCE FOR A HEALTHIER WORLD**

The Alliance is an initiative integrating diverse expertise and perspectives to unlock groundbreaking knowledge and resolve the most complex global health equity challenges of our time. Scholars, researchers, and leaders from all disciplines—medicine, nursing, public health, international relations, engineering, education, business, the social sciences, creative arts, and bioethics—work side-by-side with partners and disadvantaged communities around the world to create a healthier, more equitable, and more just world.