



For Immediate Release

Simply Smiles lauds Foster Home Safe Zones Ordinance enacted by Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Reservation Tribal Council, law enforcement

LA PLANT, SD — The Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Reservation Tribal Council and law enforcement recently enacted the Foster Home Safe Zones Ordinance, which ensures that tribal laws protect the safety and wellbeing of foster children and families.

“Foster Care Home Areas on the Reservation fulfill the critical need of providing homes for Native children within the children's own kin and community,” according to language in the ordinance. “In order to provide secure Foster Care Home Areas for children and families and to continue to attract high-quality employees and volunteers, it is critical that the children, families, employees, and volunteers on-site at the Foster Care Home Areas are safe, cared for, and free from harm.”

Key elements of the ordinance include the formal prohibition of certain activities and behaviors within a half-mile of any premises deemed a Foster Care Home Area. These activities include the use of firearms and weapons; the use of drugs and other controlled substances; unauthorized access and breaches of property; harassment or unlawful activities that threaten safety; and interfering with the peaceful operations of a Foster Care Home Area.

The Simply Smiles Children’s Village in La Plant, South Dakota is one such location deemed a Foster Care Home Area. The Simply Smiles Children’s Village provides culturally centered care and works to keep Native children who are in need of foster care with kin and community, upholding the spirit of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). The Village offers extensive services, including a full range of mental health care offerings.

“It is vital that our kids feel physically and emotionally safe,” said Marcella Gilbert, Cheyenne River Member and Director of the Simply Smiles Children’s Village. “The Foster Home Safe Zones Ordinance is yet another element that upholds youth and community safety and helps children on their path to healing.”

The Simply Smiles Children’s Village on the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Reservation is a collaborative effort, with formal support from the Cheyenne River Tribal Council; partnerships with tribal elders, Native American luminaries, and activists across the country; and licensing from the State of South Dakota Department of Social Services. Simply Smiles also operates a Children’s Village for indigenous children in Oaxaca, Mexico.

“We share with Simply Smiles a vision for our wakanyeza, our sacred children, and we are pleased to do all we can to support the Simply Smiles Children’s Village,” writes Tribal Chairman Harold C. Frazier and CRST Chief of Police Joe Brings Plenty in a joint statement.

To learn more about Simply Smiles and its Children’s Villages, please visit simplysmiles.org.

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SimplySmiles.org

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About Simply Smiles:

Simply Smiles is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization that builds villages of foster homes where children are raised by families and in strong, intentional communities. The organization operates a Children's Village in Oaxaca, Mexico and is currently launching the first-of-its-kind Village for Native American children on the Cheyenne River Reservation in South Dakota.

Simply Smiles recognizes the strength that is born from overcoming adversity. It nurtures children to become adults who are driven and prepared to fulfill their dreams and help better society—for us all. For more information, visit: www.simplysmiles.org

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Press & media resources (including imagery for use): simplysmiles.org/press-media-resources