

PALA YOUTH EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVE PROGRAM



NEWSLETTER

“Social media is a powerful tool for youth, but the true impact comes from how it's used to connect and create.”



What's Happening This Month?



Social Media Good vs Bad

Social media has a profound impact on Native youth, both positive and negative. On the positive side, it provides a platform for connection, cultural expression, and sharing stories, helping Native youth stay connected to their heritage and communities. It also fosters a sense of belonging and support through online groups. However, the downside is that social media can contribute to negative stereotypes, bullying, and mental health challenges, especially when young people face unrealistic beauty standards or harmful comparisons. Navigating these influences requires balance and awareness to ensure social media serves as a tool for empowerment rather than harm.

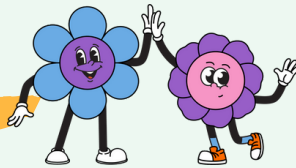
Native fact of the month

Deb Haaland (Laguna Pueblo) – The first Native American woman to serve in the U.S. Cabinet as the Secretary of the Interior, Deb Haaland is a trailblazer in politics and environmental justice, showing Native youth that they can be leaders in government and policy.



"It's Creative Time!"

The Pala Suicide Prevention Program, in collaboration with the Pala Housing Resource Center, is hosting an event with Painted Earth on April 14th from 3 to 5 p.m. They will be bringing ceramic planters for participants to decorate. This family event is open to youth ages 10 and up. The purpose is to bring families together through art and foster important conversations about mental health, emphasizing that no one is ever a bother and helping to prevent suicide.



UPCOMING EVENTS

FIELD TRIP TO DTI & SAN MANUEL

Exciting field trip opportunities happening this April! *Dream the Impossible* is an all-day event designed to inspire Native youth to chase their dreams. The *San Manuel Health and Wellness Event* will feature presenters, food trucks, and raffles. Both events are fantastic opportunities for youth ages 12-19. Be sure to RSVP to secure your spot!



Driving School

Heads up, Pala! A whole new generation of young drivers will soon be hitting the streets on the rez. Our driving school and behind-the-wheel classes are ready to welcome youth, and we encourage them to get involved. Join the waitlist today! Just a reminder: participants need to be at least 15½ years old to sign up.

PALA YOUTH EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVE PROGRAM

YOUTH 12-19

EVENT OPPORTUNITIES

SIGN UP NOW

DREAM THE IMPOSSIBLE
NATIVE YOUTH CONFERENCE
OUR 17TH ANNUAL
SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 2025
9:00 AM - 6:30 PM
WHERE: CAL STATE SAN BERNARDINO
SIGN UP DEADLINE: APRIL 9, 2025

SAN MANUEL HEALTH & WELLNESS
SATURDAY, APRIL 19, 2025
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
WHERE: SAN MANUEL, HIGHLAND, CA
SIGN UP DEADLINE: APRIL 16, 2025

PERMISSION SLIPS REQUIRED TO ATTEND

CONTACT: PAULA 760-638-1676 | DEANN DRA 760-893-0769 | MATT 760-717-0448

*subject to change



Follow us

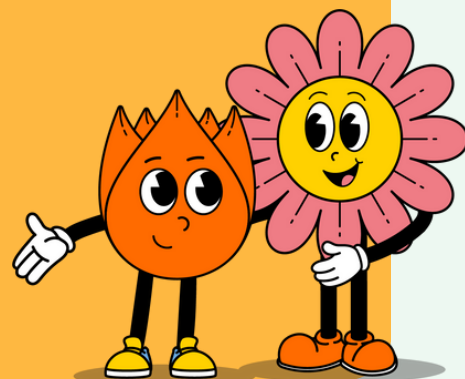
@palahousingresourcecenter

Social Media & MENTAL HEALTH



This generation of social media has many pros and cons. Social media pros are marketing, connecting and communication, information and news, and opportunities for learning and collaboration. It allows people to stay connected with friends and family, regardless of distance, and provides a platform for sharing experiences and ideas. Social media can also serve as an excellent tool for educators and students, offering access to a wealth of resources and facilitating new ways of learning.

However, the cons of social media should not be overlooked. It can contribute to issues such as cyberbullying, privacy concerns, and the spread of misinformation. Excessive use may also lead to increased anxiety and stress, particularly among young people. It's important for users to be mindful of their social media habits and to engage with these platforms in ways that promote positive interactions and well-being. Balancing the benefits and drawbacks is key to making the most of social media while minimizing its potential negative impacts.



Scrolling through social media can turn your brain into being frazzled, especially for young adults who treat it like a lifeline! So, how do you hit the pause button? Do you have withdraws and can't handle being away? It's important to remember that taking a break from social media is not only okay but can be incredibly beneficial for your mental health.

Here are a few strategies to help you unplug and recharge:

-Set Boundaries: Allocate specific times during the day for checking social media and stick to them. This will help you avoid constant scrolling and make your usage more intentional.

-Digital Detox: Consider taking a day or weekend off from all social media platforms. Use this time to focus on offline activities you enjoy, like cultural gatherings, outdoors, or spending time with loved ones.

-Mindfulness Practices: Engage in activities like meditation or yoga that help center your mind and reduce stress. These practices can be a great way to start or end your day.

-Find Alternative Activities: Explore hobbies that don't involve screens, such as drawing, cooking, or gardening. These can provide a sense of accomplishment and joy.

-Connect in Real Life: Make plans to meet up with friends or family in person. Building and maintaining real-world relationships can be more fulfilling than virtual connections.

Remember, it's about finding a balance that works for you and promotes your overall well-being. Taking control of your social media habits can lead to a healthier, happier digital life.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND EDUCATION



Chances are, if you're a student in this day and age, you're on social media of some kind. Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, etc. all have an endless supply of entertaining content, but they also have their own ways of communicating and spreading ideas. From life hacks to simple DIY crafts, there's no shortage of content dedicated to helping others learn something new, which showcases the potential for social media to spread more good than harm. Unfortunately, if you've been around social media long enough, you've likely seen some of the uglier things humanity has to offer: fights, bullying, harassment under the guise of a prank, etc.

The reality is, you get shown content based on an algorithm that predicts what you would be interested in based on your interests and what you've previously engaged with. That power solely rests with you. Occasionally, something out of what you normally seek out will pop up on your feed based on popularity or if it's paid to be boosted by the creator, but for the most part, it will show you what it thinks you like. Views = support, so it's important to use your best judgement when deciding what to engage with.



In education, social media has been used to improve communication, post notifications for upcoming events, easily share any announcements. As a student, try to use these platforms responsibly and maintain a respectful presence and discourse online. Social media, when used effectively in the classroom can also foster community if it's only for that purpose. It can help with collaborative learning when being together isn't an option, provide a wealth of resources that may otherwise not be found, and it can sharpen your own digital skills which will come in handy as you enter the professional world.

The potential downsides are also numerous. Some students may be more easily distracted by the temptation to constantly check and refresh the feed. It also carries some risk for privacy and security through online bullying and exposure to inappropriate content, which is why it is important to remain respectful and professional, even in these spaces you think provide anonymity. Along with inappropriate content is false news and information. Just because content is popular does not mean that it is real. This is where you have to use your judgement and conduct your own research outside of social media to verify certain claims.



MUTE BIG TOBACCO



Tobacco & Social Media- A Dangerous Mix

Tobacco isn't the only thing that's addictive—so is social media. It's become one of the biggest tools for tobacco companies and influencers to push their products, making smoking look “cool” and normalizing it for younger audiences. When people smoke on live streams or in videos, it sends the wrong message to teens and younger kids as well. On the flip side, social media can also be a powerful tool for education and prevention. We can use the same platforms to spread awareness about the real effects of smoking and vaping, share facts, and give youth the knowledge they need to make informed decisions. However, it's also a challenge because misinformation spreads just as fast—if not faster—than the truth.

So, what can we do? Educate, engage, and empower. Let's flood social media with accurate info, highlight the downsides of smoking, and support a culture where choosing health over addiction is the norm.

KEEP THE TRADITIONS

If we educate and involve the next generation in our tribal communities, we can look forward to breaking cycles of addiction. By engaging youth in cultural activities and teaching them the true purpose of tobacco and other native plants, we give them something deeper to connect with—something to be proud of.

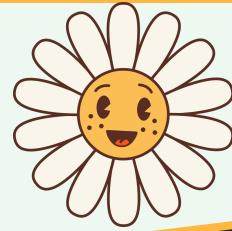
Tobacco was never meant for addiction; it holds a sacred place in our traditions. When youth understands its cultural significance, they're less likely to be influenced by the commercialized, harmful versions pushed by big industries.

Every young person has the power to be a teacher in their own way—sharing knowledge, leading by example, and shaping the future of our communities. Let's give them the tools to honor tradition, not addiction.





Earth Day



TOGETHER FOR OUR PLANET

2025

Let's Keep
it Green
and Clean!



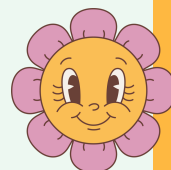
April 22



Earth Day serves as a reminder to protect and preserve ancestral lands, which are vital to cultural identity.



By participating in Earth Day, youth can continue traditions of environmental stewardship passed down through generations.



**LEAD THE CHARGE
IN PROTECTING THE
EARTH FOR FUTURE
GENERATIONS.**



YOUTH IN ACTION



April, 24th
2025

Freedom Writers

The Freedom Writers' First Workshop at Pala: A Journey of Connection and Growth

The Freedom Writers, a group of passionate educators and advocates for youth empowerment, traveled to Pala to host their first workshop with our community. Their mission was clear: to help young people build stronger relationships and friendships, empowering them with the tools to connect deeply with others. This workshop marked the beginning of an exciting journey, as the Freedom Writers arrived with a sense of excitement and dedication to foster growth and understanding among our youth.

A Focus on Building Relationships & Friendships

The heart of the workshop was centered around building meaningful relationships. The Freedom Writers guided the youth through various activities that emphasized trust, empathy and communication. Through storytelling exercises, participants lessoned to their personal stories, listening with open hearts and minds. They learned that forming genuine connections requires vulnerability, respect, and patience. These activities helped break down barriers, encouraging the youth to embrace their differences while celebrating shared experiences. As the workshop came to a close, the youth left with newfound skills, strengthened relationships, and a deeper understanding of the importance of building friendships that are rooted in trust, empathy, and shared stories.





MMIP Voices for Change

May is recognized as Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP) Awareness Month, a time to reflect on and raise awareness about the crisis that continues to impact Indigenous communities across North America. The MMIP epidemic disproportionately affects Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people, with many cases going unsolved or underreported. The inadequate attention and action to address these missing persons cases has created a sense of urgency for change.

Youth play a crucial role in advocating for justice and raising awareness about MMIP. As the future leaders of society, they are in a unique position to create positive change, spread knowledge, and ensure that Indigenous voices are heard and valued. Here are some ways the youth can get involved:

- Educate Themselves and Others
- Support Indigenous-led Organizations
- Advocate for Policy Change
- Use Social Media for Awareness
- Support Indigenous Youth to tell their own stories



UPCOMING EVENTS

- Listening Circle Apr 3rd
- Painted Earth Workshop Apr. 14th
- Freedom Writers Workshop April 24th & new date May 15th
- Youth Automotive Workshop May 31st

Follow us on IG

[@palahousingresourcecenter](https://www.instagram.com/palahousingresourcecenter)

PHRC YOUTH EVENTS

Pala Youth Empowerment INITIATIVE

Pala Youth Empowerment Initiative

WE ARE OPEN SATURDAYS

April Schedule

Monday - Friday 10:30 am-7 pm

Saturdays, April 12th & 19th 9am-5pm

April 26th 9am-4 pm

For Any Questions

Contact Maria Villegas

(760) 315-0104



Get ready for something awesome! The Pala Youth Empowerment Initiative is hosting Listening Circles twice a month, every other Thursday, just for you! This is your chance to stay in the loop on all the exciting upcoming events, help plan cool activities, and so much more. Come join us, have your voice heard, and be a part of something amazing!



Listening Circle

CALLING ALL YOUTH AGES 12-24
LET US KNOW WHAT WE CAN DO TO HELP PALA
YOUTH WITH JOB TRAINING, MENTORSHIP,
EDUCATION, COMMUNITY GARDENING, AND SOCIAL
MEDIA MANGEMENT.

March 20th, April 3rd & 17th
From 4:30pm-5pm

AT THE PALA HOUSING RESOURCE CENTER
CONTACT MARIA FOR MORE INFORMATION

(760) 315-0104 | mvillegas@palatribe.com



HOUSING EVENTS

PALA HOUSING RESOURCE CENTER
AND PALA SOCIAL SERVICES INVITE
YOU TO
COMMUNITY FAMILY NIGHT
WITH

PAINTED EARTH WORKSHOP



MONDAY APRIL 14, 2025
3PM-5PM @ PALA HOUSING
RESOURCE CENTER

- PICK A CANVAS OR SUCCULENT PLANTER TO WORK WITH!
- LEARN BRUSHWORK AND TEXTURE TECHNIQUES!
- UP TO 25 PEOPLE
 - AGES 10 AND UP

RSVP
PAULA (760) 638-1676
DEANN DRA (760) 893-0769
MATT (760) 717-0448



PALA YOUTH MEMBERS & COMMUNITY

Freedom Writers

Part 2 - Workshop Series

****SENSITIVE TOPICS WILL BE DISCUSSED****
AGES 12 WILL NEED PARENTAL CONSENT, UNLESS
ACCOMPANIED BY THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN. PLEASE DO NOT
BRING CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 12.

April 24, 2025

Time: 4:30 PM - 6:00 PM
Where: Pala Administration
Building
12196 Pala Mission Road
Pala, CA 92059

REGISTER NOW



SCAN ME

WORKSHOP #2 - ADDRESSING
BULLYING, RACIAL ISSUES &
PROBLEM-SOLVING

***DOOR PRIZES**
***SNACKS**

Expected Outcomes Through this workshop series,
students will:

- *Engage in meaningful conversations about personal experiences and social challenges.
 - *Develop conflict resolution skills and emotional resilience.
 - *Find inspiration for personal growth and positive change through shared storytelling.
- This initiative aligns with the Freedom Writers Foundation's mission to empower students through education, engagement, and community support

<https://forms.office.com/r/RAB5cZmpB2?origin=jprlink>

Paula 760-638-1676 | Matt 760- 717-0448

Youth Digital Media Lessons

**Starting In
April**

RSVP RSVP

Wanting to learn more
about:

- Pod Cast Production
- Managing youth social media
- Developing Content
- Video and Audio Editing



Where: PTRC
Ages: 12 to 24
2 DAYS A WEEK
4:30 PM - 6:30 PM



RSVP to Deannandra Molina: dmolina@palatribe.com or (760) 893-0769

CALLING ALL YOUTH! 📣

Join the Conversation!
Help Prevent Sexual Violence
in our Community!

AGES
12 - 20

SHNWC is hosting focus groups to tackle the critical issue of preventing rape and sexual violence among youth and young adults in our community.

We're looking for 10 youth, ages 12-20, to share their thoughts and ideas on prevention strategies in a focused discussion session.

Why Participate?

- ✓ HELP a friend
- ✓ Make a difference in your community
- ✓ Share your voice and insights
- ✓ Receive a gift card as a thank-you for your time

**RECEIVE
A GIFT CARD!**

LET'S WORK TOGETHER TO CREATE A SAFER FUTURE.
YOUR INPUT MATTERS! 🌟

Contact Joy to Sign Up or Ask Questions

760-644-4174

joy@shnwc.org



This material was made possible by Grant No. 1A11CE0022340-00, from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

HOUSING EVENTS




YOUTH AUTOMOTIVE WORKSHOP

MAY 31ST
10AM-1PM



Hands on Learning

- EMERGENCY SAFETY**
Flat tire, hydroplaning, loss of power while driving, how to jump a dead battery, etc.
- AUTOMOTIVE MAINTENANCE**
checking fluids, understanding the consequences of not performing repairs and common vehicle problems.
- NAVIGATING A MECHANIC**
How to find a good mechanic and how to confirm or deny repairs.
- FINANCIAL LITERACY**
Best tips when purchasing a used vehicle and understanding private and used car dealership.

Limited Space Available!

For youth 15 and up! In this 3-hour hands-on workshop, learn essential automotive skills like financial literacy, car care, and more. Four participants are encouraged to bring their own vehicle for practice.

Each participant will receive:

- Reusable work gloves
- A tire pressure gauge
- Printed materials

Sign up today and start your automotive journey!

Contact Maria:

- 📞 (760) 315-0104
- ✉️ mvillegas@palatribe.com
- 📍 Pala Housing Resources Center

Let's Go Skateboarding!

Weekly youth trips to



Fun and no judgement!

Open to all ages, ability and skill level!

Starting Friday, March 28, 2025
4PM - 5PM

Limited to groups of 7

RSVP with Matt Morning Star
Email: mmorningstar@palatribe.com
Cell: (760) 717-0448




Pala Youth Empowerment Initiative Presents

DRIVING LESSONS

Attention all youth enrolled in online driving school classes! The PHRC is offering a space where you can complete your online classes and get answers to any questions you may have about the driving school.

Every Monday starting April 7th
5:00pm-6:30pm
*check-ins are required



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



REGISTRATION NOW

Contact: Maria Villegas
(760) 315-0104






SAVE THE DATE!

SUMMER KICK OFF

SATURDAY, JUNE 21ST

SPECIAL GUEST
BOBBY VON




Join us for an inspiring art experience with Bobby Von Martin, a talented artist renowned for his Native American-inspired artwork. With a passion for empowering youth, Bobby will be leading an exciting art class, sharing his unique creative process and cultural insights. Don't miss this opportunity to learn from a true artistic visionary!

ART, GAMES, FOOD AND RAFFLES

PALA HOUSING RESOURCE CENTER
35990 PALA TEMECULA RD, PALA, CA 92059

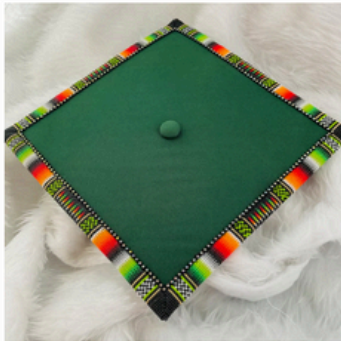
AGES 12-24

MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: MARIA VILLEGAS (760) 315-0104

COMMUNITY EVENTS

GRADUATION CAP BEADING WORKSHOP

WITH BRIGHID PULSKAMP
Part One - Wednesday, April 9th
Part Two - Wednesday, April 23rd
10:00AM-2:00PM



LOCATION:
PALA OLD TRIBAL HALL

Space is limited so please be committed
Ages 13+ unless accompanied by an adult

All materials will be provided.

Bead colors are limited, if you would like to purchase different colors
the bead size will be provided when you reserve your space.

NO DRUGS, ALCOHOL, VAPING, OR SMOKING ARE PERMITTED AT THIS EVENT

PLEASE CONTACT NA'LEIGHA AGUAYO AT
NAGUAYO@PALATRIBE.COM/760 891 3590 TO RESERVE YOUR SPOT



Pala Learning Center Presents:

Art Workshop with Fallbrook School of the Arts!

Design your own 3D art
piece with guidance from
expert instructors at the
Fallbrook School of the
Arts!

Discover unique artistic
techniques from
professionals and explore
how creativity can be a
powerful form of therapy.

All youth welcome,
there will be two
different projects
based on your age!

April 11th 2pm to 3:30pm at the Pala
Youth Center

Contact Rhiannon for questions rhjohnson@palatribe.com or 760-742-1997

SAVE THE DATE

SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 2025

11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

INTERTRIBAL EARTH DAY

POLLINATOR  **SUPERHEROES**
LITTLE CREATURES BIG IMPACT

LA JOLLA CAMPGROUND
22000 HWY 76
PAUMA VALLEY, CA

THIS IS A
RAIN
OR SHINE
EVENT

**INTERTRIBAL
EARTH DAY**

THIS IS A WASTE FREE EVENT. PLEASE BRING YOUR
OWN WATER OR DRINK CONTAINER.
WATER DISPENSERS WILL BE AVAILABLE TO REFILL
YOUR BOTTLE.

THIS IS A ZERO WASTE TRIBAL COMMUNITY EVENT SPONSORED BY LA JOLLA,
LOS COYOTES, PAUMA, PALA, PECHANGA, RINCON, SAN PASQUAL, AND SANTA YNEZ.
FOR INFORMATION PLEASE EMAIL ROB.ROY@LAJOLLA-NSN.GOV.

**Annual
Kupa Cemetery
Warner's Gathering**
April 19, 2025
10:00 a.m.



Come join us for a prayer to our ancestors

For more info contact:
Cupa Cultural Center @ 760.891.3590

SAVE THE DATE

50TH CUPA DAYS

MAY 3-4, 2025
CUPA CULTURAL CENTER GROUNDS

**FREE
ADMISSION
AND
PARKING**

**SAT
10A TO DUSK
SUN
11A TO 4:30P**

**OPENING
CEREMONIES
10A SAT**

**PEON
GAMES
DUSK SAT**

CUPA.PALATRIBE.COM
THE PUBLIC IS WELCOME

VENDOR INQUIRIES CONTACT NA'LEIGHA AGUAYO @ 760-891-3590, NAGUAYO@PALATRIBE.COM

NO DRUGS, ALCOHOL, VAPING, OR SMOKING ARE PERMITTED AT THIS EVENT

NEW
DATE
MAY
15

PALA YOUTH MEMBERS & COMMUNITY

Freedom Writers

Part 3 - Workshop Series



****SENSITIVE TOPICS WILL BE DISCUSSED****
AGES 12 WILL NEED PARENTAL CONSENT, UNLESS
ACCOMPANIED BY THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN. PLEASE DO NOT
BRING CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 12.

>>> May 15, 2025
Time: 4:30 PM - 6:00 PM
Where: Pala Administration Building
12196 Pala Mission Road
Pala, CA 92059

REGISTER NOW



SCAN ME

WORKSHOP #3 - A TOAST FOR CHANGE

***DOOR PRIZES**
***SNACKS**

Expected Outcomes Through this workshop series, students will:

- *Engage in meaningful conversations about personal experiences and social challenges.
- *Develop conflict resolution skills and emotional resilience.
- *Find inspiration for personal growth and positive change through shared storytelling.

This initiative aligns with the Freedom Writers Foundation's mission to empower students through education, engagement, and community support

<https://forms.office.com/r/BAB5cZmpB2?origin=lpriLink> Paula 760-638-1676 | Matt 760-717-0448

PROM CLOTHING DRIVE

DONATIONS NEEDED!

What we are looking for:

- Dresses
- Suits
- Dress pants & shirts
- Shoes
- Vests
- Accessories (purses, jewelry, ties, belts)
- Unopened hair accessories (clips, pins, headbands)
- Unopened beauty items (makeup, nail polish, fake lashes)

Accepting all sizes and styles

Drop Off Location: Pala Learning Center or Pala Youth Center

Day/Time: Weekdays 7:30am to 5pm

Last Day to Donate: April 23rd, 2025

Contact Rhiannon
(rhjohnson@palatribe.com), April
(acantu@palatribe.com) or call 760-
742-1997 for more details

DONATE

Pala Youth Empowerment Initiative

**"FOR YOUTH, BY
YOUTH"**



Location:
35990 Pala Temecula Road
Pala, CA 92059
www.PalaHRC.com

Youth Contact:
Maria Villegas
(760) 315-0104
mvillegas@palatribe.com

Paula Ellenwood
(760) 638-1676
pellenwood@palatribe.com

Matthew Morning Star
(760) 717-0448
mmorningstar@palatribe.com

Deandra Molina
(760) 893-0769
dmolina@palatribe.com

The Pala Youth Empowerment Initiative is based on a "for youth by youth" approach. We encourage youth to actively be involved with the newsletter, content, trainings, podcasts and activities.

Youth Suicide Prevention engages youth with a culturally sensitive, trauma-informed approach through social group events, and peer mentoring to empower Native youth, ages 3-25, to be resilient, positive, and productive members of the community.

The Pala Tobacco Program is dedicated to inspiring and motivating our community—especially our youth—to learn and honor the traditional use of tobacco. Our mission is to promote a culturally forward mindset, ensuring that our traditions are preserved and respected in today's world. By reconnecting with our roots, we strive to build a healthier future for generations to come, keeping our traditions alive for a long time to come.