

Circle Of Life: Cancer Education and Wellness

for American Indian and Alaska Native Communities



American Cancer Society Circle Of LifeSM
Cancer Education and Wellness for American Indian and Alaska Native Communities

Wellness Along the Cancer Journey:
Coordinator's and Educator's Guide

Revised October 2016

Chapter 4: Circle Of Life Educators



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Circle Of Life Educators

The major responsibility of Circle Of Life coordinators is to find volunteer educators in their tribe or community. These are the people who will share the cancer education modules. The coordinator may choose to lead the sessions themselves initially. Even if they do, it helps for them to include others when teaching people in the community about cancer.

Coordinators should look for educators who are committed to their communities and to helping others. Program educators are people who want to serve their communities by sharing information about:

- Healthy lifestyles
- Disease prevention
- Early detection and screening for cancer
- Cancer treatment and care

Educators will need a basic understanding of how cancer develops, is diagnosed, and treated. They will also need to know about early detection and healthy lifestyle choices. The Circle Of Life initiative will help coordinators and educators learn this and guide them in teaching others.

Following are the resources to help coordinators and educators understand the importance of the educator's job. Please review the educator characteristics and responsibilities that follow. In addition, please see the detailed volunteer job description listed in Appendix A.

Characteristics of Circle Of Life Educators

Circle Of Life educators have a strong connection to the community in which they work. They want to encourage health and are seen as natural helpers in the community.

They are also seen as:

- Patient

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- Caring
- Compassionate
- Friendly
- Strong
- Courageous
- Respectful
- Dedicated
- Committed
- Open-minded
- Flexible
- Creative
- Resourceful*

**Characteristics based on the National Community Health Advisor Study*

Roles of Circle Of Life Educators

Circle Of Life educators may be asked to do one or more of the following:

- Talk to people in their community about their health needs and issues.
- Talk to people in their community about healthy lifestyles, finding cancer early, and cancer treatment.
- Help people to get the health services they need.
- Talk to health and social service providers.
- Help people get culturally appropriate support and information.
- Share the Circle Of Life modules with others one-on-one or during events or meetings.
- Plan and organize gatherings, events or meetings to educate people.
- Lead others – which can include managing their needs, fears, and worries.

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- Promote the initiative through word of mouth, fliers, posters, newsletters, radio, and other routes.
- Arrange food, meeting rooms, transportation to meetings, educational tools, supplies, and incentives.
- Learn basic proposal writing skills or find others to do this to get funding support (grant writing resources are available in Appendix B).
- Evaluate the Initiative's progress, successes and challenges.*

** Based on the National Community Health Advisor Study*

Circle Of Life Components

The Circle Of Life initiative is a well-researched program designed to disseminate cancer education and wellness information to communities or tribes through coordinators and educators. Each module in the program, with the exception of the Cancer Resources module, includes sections on a specific topic, activities, stories of hope, key messages, and resources.

The Circle Of Life modules cover the following:

1. Cancer types
2. Healthy habits and cancer screening
3. Treatment
4. Palliative care
5. End of life
6. American Indian and Alaska Native healing
7. Cancer resources

Educators have the option of teaching directly from the written modules or using the PowerPoint slides that go with each module. The slides highlight key information from each module.

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It is up to the coordinators and educators to decide how best to share the information in the communities or tribes. They may choose to do it over a period of weeks or months, or they may have a half-day or full-day session that covers one to three complete modules.

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Ways to Share the Circle Of Life Modules

Possible Event	Education Format	Information Covered	Materials
Women's group	Meet one hour a week for two months. Cover one section each week from the Cancer Types module	Cancer Types <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breast cancer • Cervical cancer • Colorectal cancer • Lung cancer • Prostate cancer • Skin cancer 	Use the modules as a guide: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review information for one section each week. 2. Complete activity. 3. Share stories of hope. 4. Wrap up with key messages.
Men's Group	Meet one hour weekly for one month. Cover one section each week in the Cancer Types module.	Cancer Types <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colorectal cancer • Lung cancer • Prostate cancer • Skin cancer 	Use the modules as a guide: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review information for one section each week. 2. Complete learning activity. 3. Share stories of hope. 4. Wrap up with key messages.
Community Event	1-2 hour educational event as part of another event. Cover sections from the Cancer Types module.	Cancer Types <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breast cancer • Cervical cancer • Colorectal cancer • Lung cancer • Prostate cancer • Skin cancer 	Use PowerPoint presentation: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Share information. 2. Complete activities. 3. Wrap up with key points.

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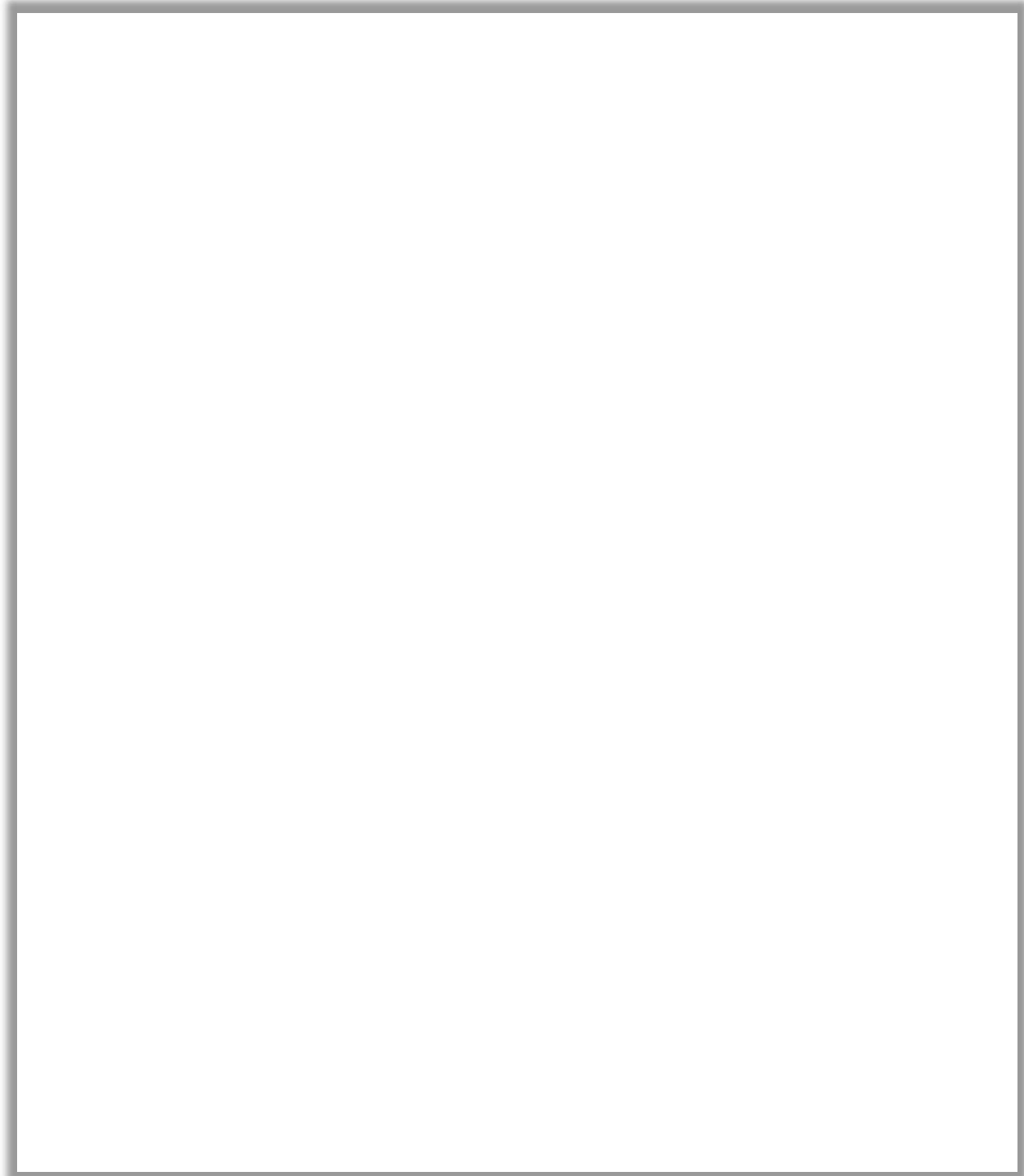
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<i>Possible Event</i>	<i>Education Format</i>	<i>Information Covered</i>	<i>Materials</i>
Circle Of Life Workshop	half-day-1½ day Circle Of Life workshop. Cover two to three modules.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coordinator’s and Educator’s Guide• Healthy Habits• Cancer Types module• Cancer Journey module• Nearing the End of Life module	Use PowerPoint presentation: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Share information on slides.2. Complete activities.3. Wrap up with key points.4. Break5. Repeat steps for additional parts.

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Activity

Write a job description for a Circle Of Life volunteer.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for writing a job description for a Circle Of Life volunteer. The box occupies most of the page below the instruction.

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Key Messages

- Circle Of Life educators like to serve their communities. They do this by sharing information about healthy lifestyles and disease prevention, finding cancer early through screening, and cancer treatment and care.
- An important role of a Circle Of Life educator is to talk to people in their community or tribe about their health needs and issues.
- Resources to help educators share the information in the Circle Of Life initiative include written modules, activities, and stories of hope. There are also key messages and Powerpoint slides with talking points that accompany each module.