



## Native Health in the Bemidji Area

# Race and Ethnicity Distribution

### How Race Is Reported and Why It Matters

The concept of race and ethnicity is far more complex than most data systems depict. In the U.S., data are generally collected and reported for six race categories: white, black or African American, American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN), Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and other. These broad categories may not align with the experiences and reality of many people, especially those who identify as multiracial. In a diverse country like America it is common for people to identify with more than one race. This is especially true for American Indians/Alaska Natives. In addition to racial identity people may identify with ethnicities, such as Hispanic/Latino or Arab.

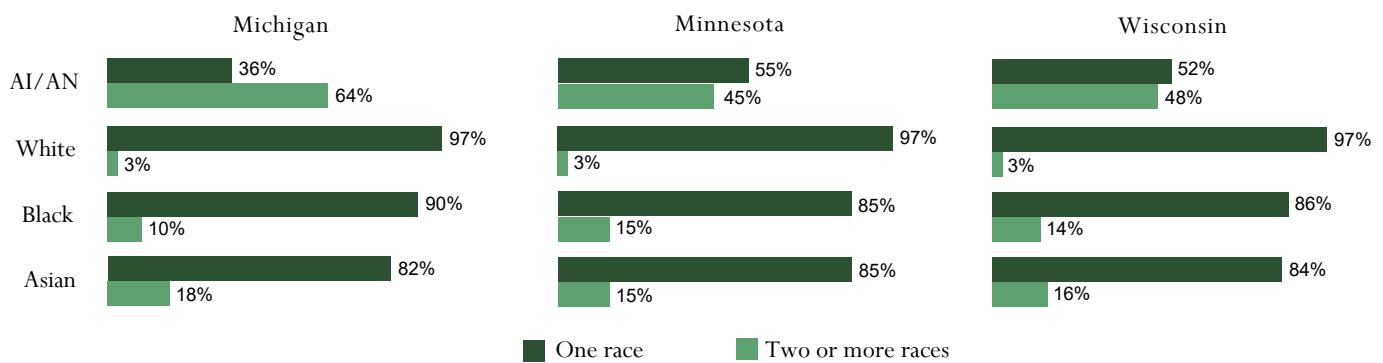
Data representation of all people is key to achieving health equity. For the sake of simplicity, data are often analyzed using single race categories, either combining all people who identify as two or more races into one group (“multiracial” or “two or more races”) or excluding them entirely from analysis. By not including American Indians/Alaska Natives who identify with more than one race, we are missing data on a large portion of a population that is already often overlooked and undercounted.

### Race and Ethnicity Distribution in Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin

Consistent with the rest of the country, more American Indian/Alaska Natives in Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin identify with two or more races compared to white, black, and Asian racial race groups (Figure 1.1, Table 1.1). While 97% of white people in each of the three states identify as white alone, only 36 to 55% of American Indian/Alaska Natives identify as American Indian/Alaska Natives alone. Notably, fewer than half of American Indian/Alaska Natives in Michigan identify as American Indian/Alaska Natives alone. This means that reports that only include data for single race categories are not reporting data on over half of those who identify as American Indian/Alaska Native.

Additionally, a larger percentage of American Indian/Alaska Natives also identify as Hispanic or Latino, compared to the white population in all three states (Figure 1.2, Table 1.2). If American Indian/Alaska Natives that also identify as Hispanic/Latino are not included in reports, then between 8 and 15% would be excluded. Considering all categories of race and ethnicity is one crucial step towards effectively addressing health issues affecting American Indians and Alaska Natives.

**Figure 1.1** Percent of Population (by Race) Identifying as One Race or Two or More Races in Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, 2017



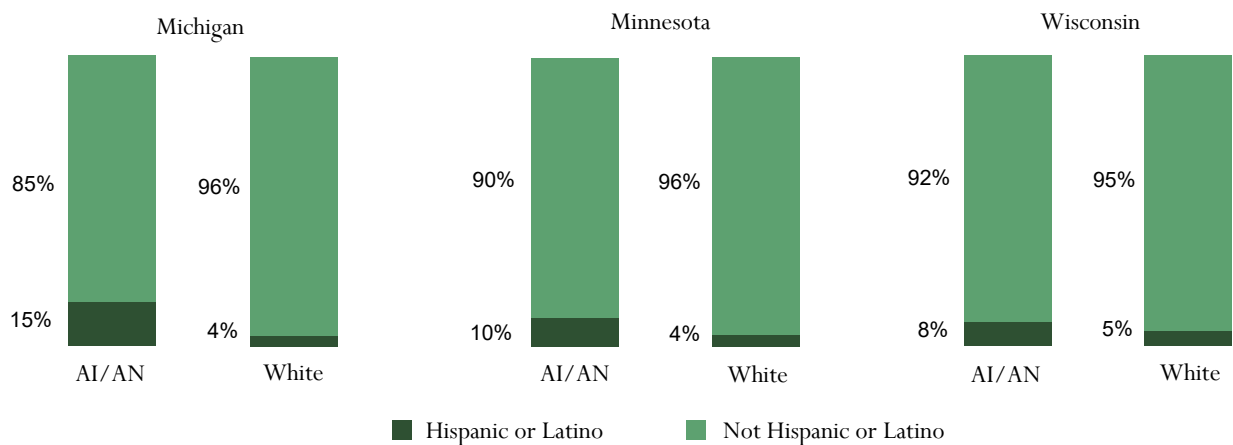
The Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Epidemiology Center (GLITEC)’s *Native Health in the Bemidji Area* fact sheet series presents data on various health-related topics for communities in the Bemidji Indian Health Service Area (Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Chicago). GLITEC welcomes discussion with Bemidji Area communities’ health staff in the use of this fact sheet to support assessment, planning, and evaluation functions. Please contact us to discuss how we may support your community.



**Table 1.1** Percent of Population (by Race) Identifying as One Race or Two or More Races in Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, 2017

State	Race	Total Population	Percent	
			One Race	Two or More Races
Michigan	AI/AN	150,627	35.5	6.5
	White	8,073,395	96.8	3.2
	Black	1,522,134	90.3	9.7
	Asian	375,289	82.1	1.8
Minnesota	AI/AN	110,430	55.1	44.9
	White	4,753,015	97.0	3.0
	Black	425,197	84.9	15.1
	Asian	329,526	85.2	14.7
Wisconsin	AI/AN	95,034	51.8	48.2
	White	5,073,303	97.4	2.6
	Black	433,227	85.5	14.5
	Asian	190,025	84.0	16.0

**Figure 1.2** Hispanic/Latino Ethnicity of American Indian/Alaska Natives and whites in Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, 2017



**Table 1.2** Hispanic/Latino Ethnicity of American Indian/Alaska Natives and Whites in Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, 2017

State	Race	Not Hispanic or Latino		Hispanic or Latino	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Michigan	AI/AN	44,263	85.4	7,541	14.6
	White	7,493,362	95.9	319,837	4.1
Minnesota	AI/AN	51,999	90.3	5,567	9.7
	White	4,434,473	96.4	163,779	3.6
Wisconsin	AI/AN	45,947	91.7	4,147	8.3
	White	4,715,129	95.2	235,448	4.8

Data Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2013-2017; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate, 2017  
References: 1. Villegas, M., Ebarb, A., Pytalski, S., Roubideaux, Y. Disaggregating American Indian & Alaska Native Data: A Review of Literature. National Congress of American Indians. July 2016. [http://www.ncai.org/DataDisaggregationAIAN-report\\_5\\_2018.pdf](http://www.ncai.org/DataDisaggregationAIAN-report_5_2018.pdf)  
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3. PolicyLink. Counting a Diverse Nation: Disaggregating Data on Race and Ethnicity to Advance a Culture of Health. 2016. Accessed at: [https://www.policylink.org/sites/default/files/Counting\\_a\\_Diverse\\_Nation\\_08\\_15\\_18.pdf?utm\\_campaign=fyi\\_newsletter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://www.policylink.org/sites/default/files/Counting_a_Diverse_Nation_08_15_18.pdf?utm_campaign=fyi_newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)