

INDIGENOUS JUSTICE & COMMUNITY SAFETY BRIEF

Pilot Issue No. 1

What the current news environment emphasizes:
incarceration, prevention, reentry, and community solutions

697	6	30 days	July 23, 2026
unique indexed articles	state search areas	standard search window	archive update

PILOT RESEARCH EDITION - INTERNAL REVIEW

Educational and community-safety purpose

This publication is an educational and community-safety resource developed by Turquoise Tiospaye. It organizes publicly available reporting and policy information to help communities, organizations, researchers, and decision-makers understand patterns in Native justice, incarceration, prevention, reentry, healing, behavioral health, and community well-being.

Prepared by Turquoise Tiospaye
Rapid City, South Dakota

Contents

1	Executive summary
2	Scope and method
3	What the pilot data shows
4	Preliminary punishment-versus-solutions question
5	South Dakota focus
6	Source ecosystem and article watchlist
7	Data-quality findings and limits
8	Path to a replicable research product
9	TTO research-to-action model

Method note

This pilot brief analyzes patterns found in an automated archive of publicly available reporting. Findings are intended to support community discussion, program development, and continued research. Records will undergo ongoing review to strengthen coding accuracy and interpretation.

1. Executive summary

Turquoise Tiospaye's new monitor created a permanent archive of 697 unique news and policy records related to Indian Country, corrections, incarceration, reentry, youth justice, behavioral health, and public policy. The archive covers South Dakota, Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, Nevada, and multi-state or national results.

258	57	55	149
direct corrections	direct solution categories	South Dakota results	clearly Native-focused sources*

The strongest pilot signal is not a final conclusion: automated tags placed 258 records in prisons, jails, or corrections, compared with 57 records directly tagged as reentry, behavioral health, or youth justice. That is a 4.5-to-1 difference. However, 382 records remain in mixed, general, Tribal justice, or funding categories and require human coding before any scientific claim is made.

*The Native-focused source count is a conservative heuristic based on a short list of clearly identifiable Native publications in the archive, not a full publisher classification.

2. Scope and method

The pilot monitor uses repeatable Google News RSS searches and stores article metadata rather than copying full articles. The workbook preserves each unique record, tracks when it was first and last seen, and records the search query that surfaced it.

Method element	Pilot design
Collection date	July 23, 2026
Search window	30 days, with overlapping weekly runs recommended
Geographies	South Dakota, Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, Nevada, plus national/multi-state
Query clusters	Indian Country; Native justice; prison and reentry
Deduplication	Unique article ID and consolidated archive record
Stored fields	Title, source, publication time, summary/snippet, URL, topic, tags, state assignment, score, first/last seen
Full text or images	Not collected

A careful interpretation

The monitor measures what search engines indexed and returned under the selected queries. It does not measure the number of incarcerated people, the number of crimes, the effectiveness of a program, or the total universe of news coverage. Those questions require official statistics or a separately designed content-analysis study.

Critical control for the next version

The current state field reflects the search route that found an article and can include false regional matches. For example, a South Dakota query can surface a North Dakota story. State counts should therefore be treated as search-output counts until manual verification is added.

3. What the pilot data shows

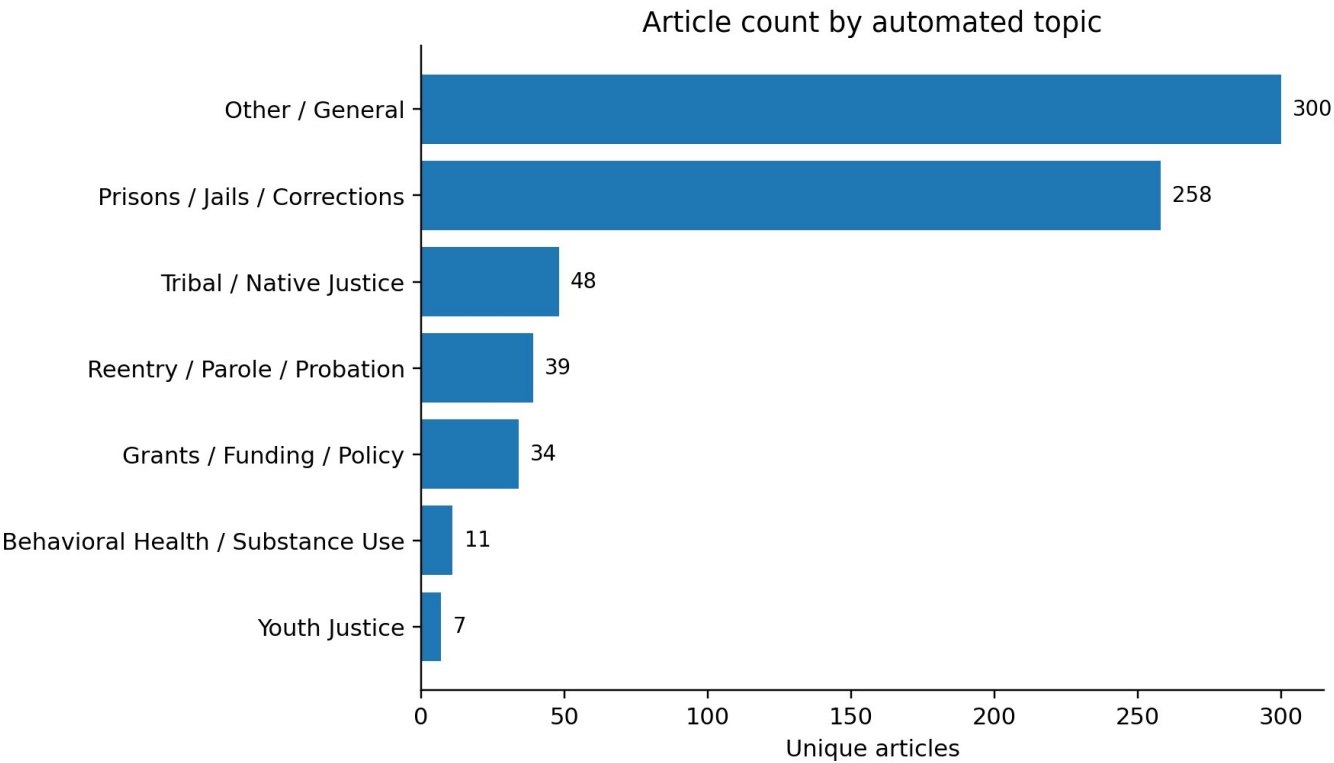


Figure 1. Automated topic distribution across 697 unique records.

Key reading: The archive is dominated by two buckets: Other / General (300) and Prisons / Jails / Corrections (258). Reentry / Parole / Probation accounts for 39 records, Grants / Funding / Policy for 34, Tribal / Native Justice for 48, Behavioral Health / Substance Use for 11, and Youth Justice for 7.

Geographic search distribution

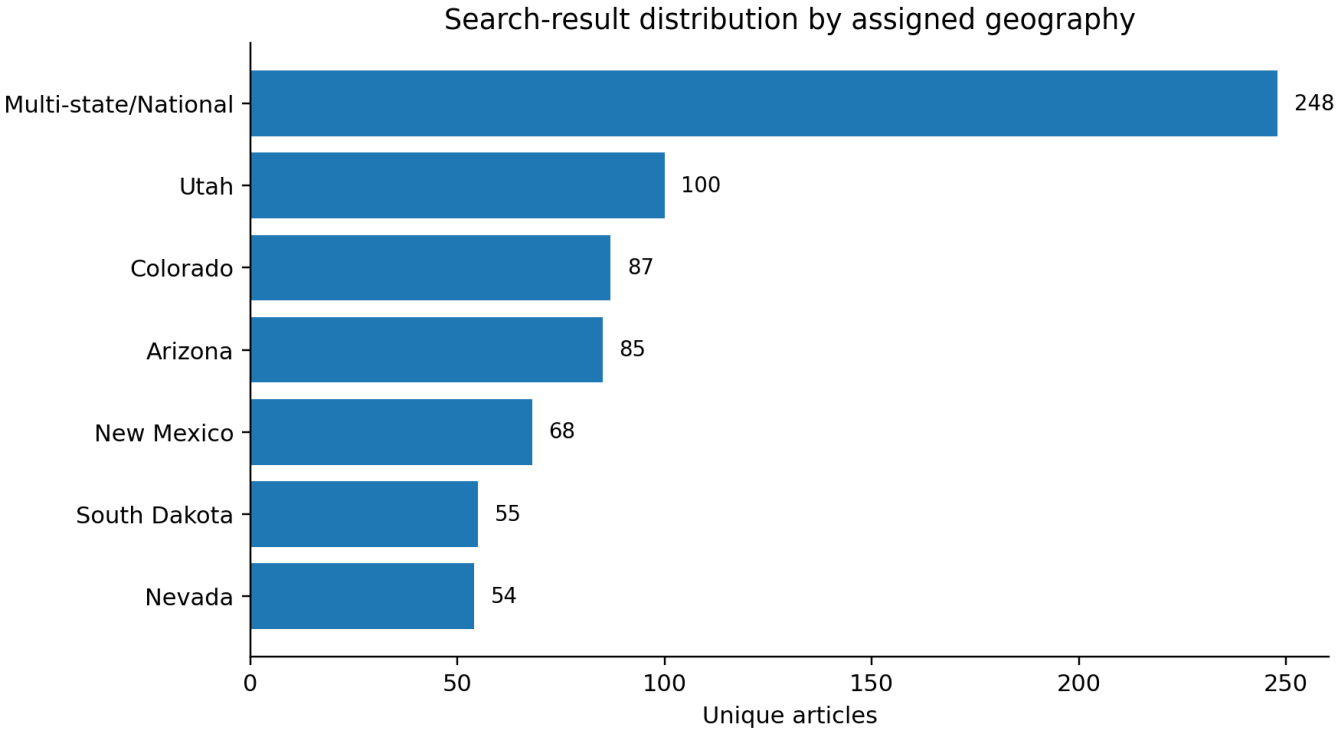


Figure 2. Results by assigned search geography. These are not yet manually validated article locations.

National and multi-state results represent 248 records. Among the six state searches, Utah returned 100 records, Colorado 87, Arizona 85, New Mexico 68, South Dakota 55, and Nevada 54. Search volume can be affected by publisher density, syndication, query wording, and Google News indexing.

Time concentration

539 records (77.3%) are dated July 2026, and 684 (98.1%) are dated June or July 2026. The archive also includes 13 older records dated March-May 2026 or 2014-2021. Those older results demonstrate why publication dates must be screened before a monthly brief is finalized.

4. Preliminary punishment-versus-solutions question

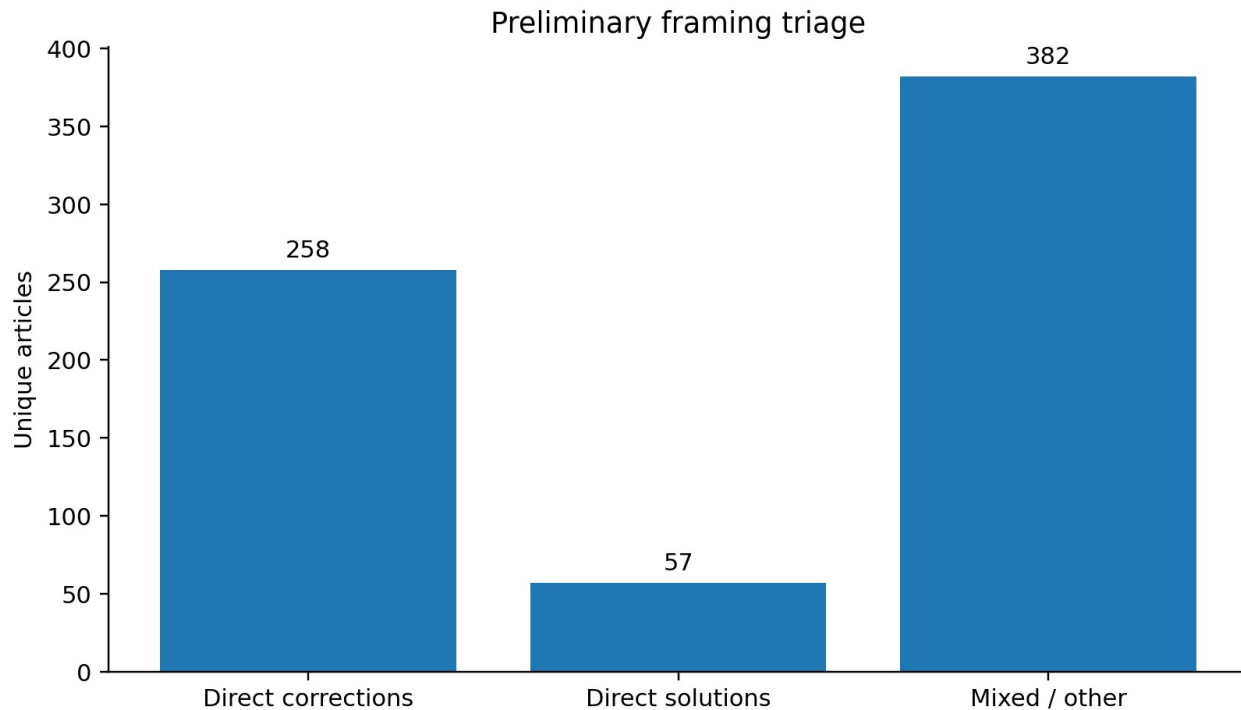


Figure 3. Conservative triage using existing automated topic labels.

For this pilot comparison, 'Direct corrections' includes only the Prisons / Jails / Corrections topic. 'Direct solutions' includes Reentry / Parole / Probation, Behavioral Health / Substance Use, and Youth Justice. All other categories are held aside as mixed or unclassified.

Pilot signal, not proof

The automated classification produced 258 direct-corrections records and 57 directly solution-oriented records - a 4.5-to-1 ratio. This suggests a testable research question, but it does not yet establish that news media systematically favor punishment. The remaining 382 records must be coded, and the search design itself must be controlled.

What a defensible finding will require

- A preregistered question and fixed coding rules.
- A broad justice-news collection strategy that does not oversample punishment terms.
- Two independent coders and a documented reliability statistic.
- Manual validation of state, topic, article type, and duplicate/syndicated stories.
- Rates by source and month, not only raw counts.
- A 12-month observation period to reduce the effect of one major event.

5. South Dakota focus

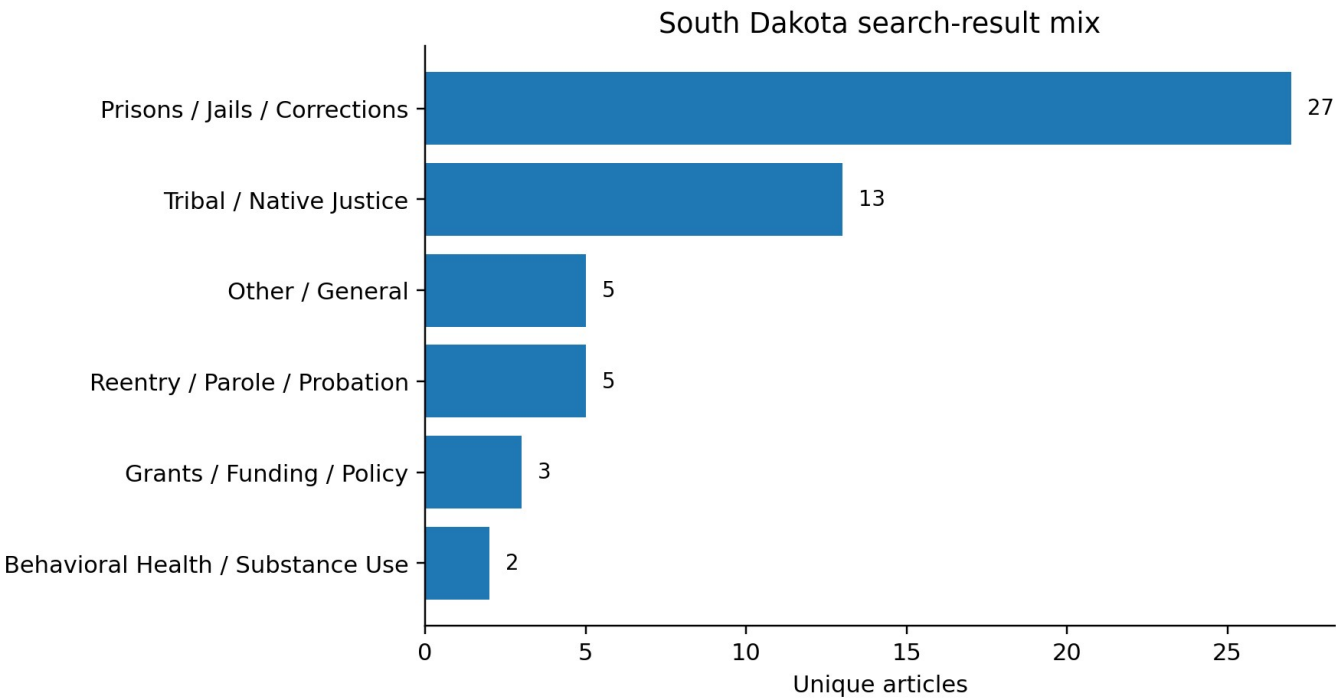


Figure 4. Automated topic mix for 55 records assigned to the South Dakota search.

The South Dakota search returned 55 records: 27 corrections, 13 Tribal/Native justice, 5 reentry/parole/probation, 2 behavioral health/substance use, 3 funding/policy, and 5 general.

Immediate LLUP and TTO watch areas

Watch area	Why it matters
Women's incarceration and overcrowding	Multiple indexed stories concerned the new Rapid City women's prison and movement of incarcerated women.
Parole policy and returns to custody	Coverage includes tighter early-release decisions and rising parole returns.
Treatment funding inside correctional settings	A state-ordered study reportedly recommended using opioid settlement funds for incarcerated people's treatment.
Reentry infrastructure	Coverage of work, housing, staffing, and corrections leadership points toward practical barriers that LLUP can track.
Native justice visibility	Thirteen South Dakota-tagged records were categorized as Tribal / Native Justice, but each requires validation for genuine Native relevance.

Track whether South Dakota coverage reports only prison capacity, arrests, and sentencing - or also explains housing, employment, treatment, family support, culture, education, and community-based alternatives. That comparison directly supports TTO's educational and community-safety mission.

6. Source ecosystem and article watchlist

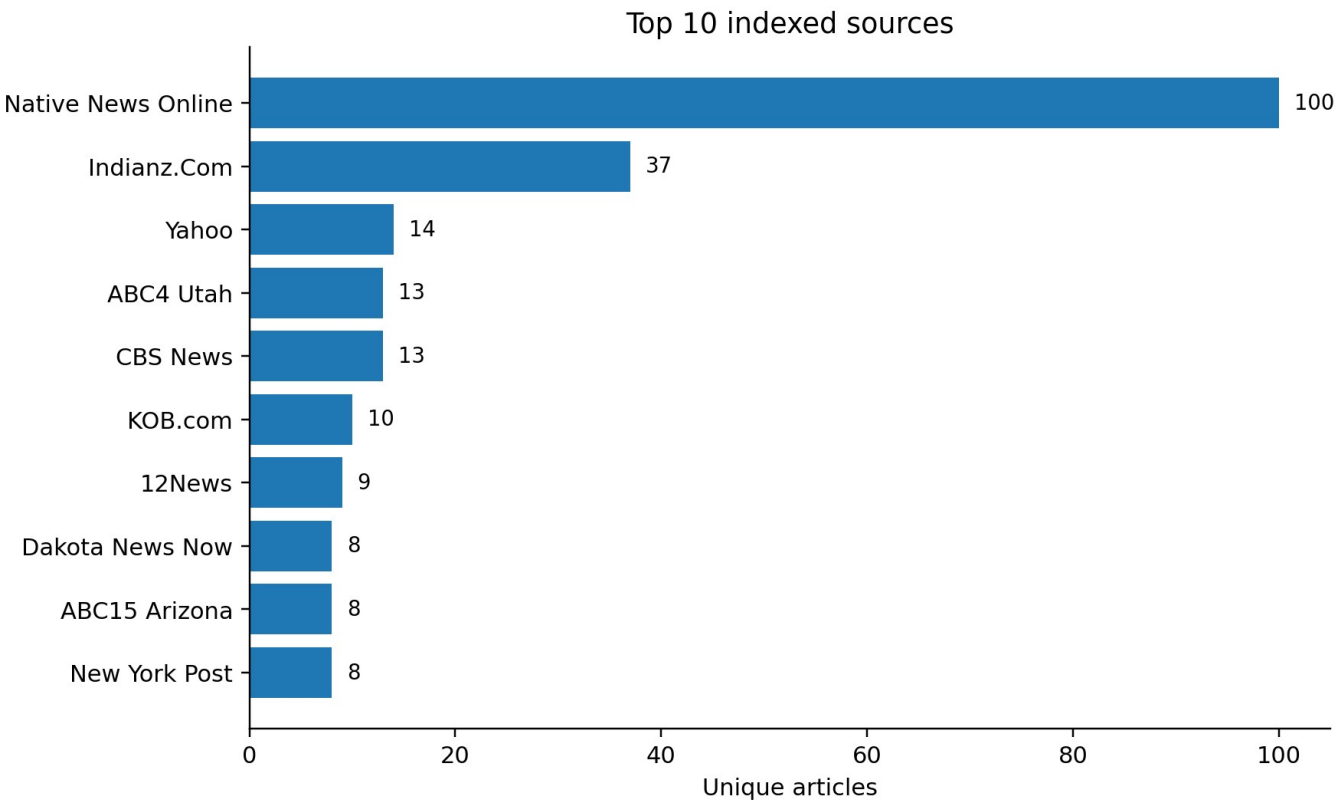


Figure 5. Ten sources with the most indexed records in the archive.

Source concentration is moderate. The top ten sources account for 220 records (31.6% of the archive), while Native News Online and Indianz.Com together account for 137 (19.7%). A professional brief should report both raw counts and source-normalized rates so high-volume publishers do not dominate the interpretation.

Selected records for human verification

The following records are strong candidates for the pilot editorial review. The linked titles open the Google News record and normally redirect to the publisher.

Source	Topic	Article	Score
Medical Xpress	Behavioral Health / Substance Use	American Indian and Alaska Native adults in California struggle with chronic disease and substance use, study finds	11

Source	Topic	Article	Score
KAXE	Behavioral Health / Substance Use	Mino-bimaadiziwin: One Native couple's journey after incarceration, addiction	9
South Dakota Searchlight	Behavioral Health / Substance Use	State-ordered study says opioid settlement money should target treatment for incarcerated people	6
Mitchell Republic	Prisons / Jails / Corrections	Work, housing and staffing: How South Dakota's corrections chief aims to keep inmates from returning	7
South Dakota Searchlight	Reentry / Parole / Probation	More inmates denied early release as more parolees return through crackdown	6
Native News Online	Other / General	Five Oklahoma Tribal Entities Awarded \$1.6 Million for Housing	10
Indianz.Com	Other / General	Native America Calling: Strengthening the tribal workforce	10
Tribal Business News	Grants / Funding / Policy	PODCAST: Native CDFI leaders reflect on progress, policy and what's next	8
Native News Online	Other / General	Fired Officers in Washington Disproportionately Land at Tribal Police Departments	8
South Dakota Searchlight	Prisons / Jails / Corrections	Incarcerated women to move into new Rapid City prison to alleviate overcrowding	8

Turquoise Tiospaye selects, verifies, codes, organizes, and analyzes publicly available information. TTO creates original charts, identifies patterns and gaps, and develops independent summaries and practical recommendations. Links are provided to original sources. Complete news stories and copyrighted article photographs are not reproduced.

7. Data-quality findings and limits

Quality finding	Implication
Archive function works	676 records were seen in two runs and 21 were seen once, showing the permanent archive can track repeat appearance without duplicating rows.
Automated topic labels are preliminary	Headlines can trigger the wrong category or miss a solution frame that appears in the article body.
State assignment needs validation	The search query that found an article is not always the article's actual geography.
Old results can enter a recent search	Thirteen records predate June 2026, including three from 2014-2021.
Priority scoring needs refinement	The current archive marks 662 records as REVIEW, 35 as MEDIUM, and none as HIGH. The score is useful, but the priority thresholds are not yet discriminating.
Syndication needs a second layer	Different URLs can carry the same underlying story from separate publishers. URL deduplication alone does not remove all content duplication.
Google News is not the whole news universe	Indexing and ranking practices can affect what is found and when.

Recommended publication gate

- ✓ Run the 30-day monitor weekly.
- ✓ Review every new record above a chosen score and a random sample of lower-scored records.
- ✓ Confirm source, publication date, geography, Native relevance, and primary topic.
- ✓ Merge syndicated versions into one underlying-story record.
- ✓ Code punishment, prevention, rehabilitation, reentry, mixed, or neither.
- ✓ Freeze the verified monthly dataset.
- ✓ Generate the public snapshot and professional brief from the verified data only.

8. Path to a replicable research product

The strongest long-term product is not simply a news list. It is a transparent Indigenous justice media and policy observatory with a documented method that outside researchers can repeat.

Stage 1 - Pilot cleanup	Create the codebook, add human-review columns, validate a 100-article pilot sample, and revise search terms.
Stage 2 - Reliability test	Use two independent coders. Calculate agreement before coding the full corpus.
Stage 3 - Twelve-month collection	Run weekly with a 30-day overlap, preserve all dated runs, and publish monthly verified datasets.
Stage 4 - Controlled analysis	Compare punishment and solution frames while controlling for source, state, month, Native-news status, and article type.
Stage 5 - Public transparency	Publish methods, coding rules, metadata, links, exclusions, charts, and an analysis script while protecting copyrighted article text.

Core monthly indicators

Indicator	Definition
Punishment coverage rate	Punishment-focused verified articles / all eligible verified articles
Solution coverage rate	Prevention + rehabilitation + reentry verified articles / all eligible verified articles
Native voice rate	Articles quoting Native people or Native organizations / Native-relevant verified articles
Evidence rate	Articles reporting outcomes, data, evaluation, or documented program results / eligible articles
Geographic balance	Verified articles per state and per source, reported as both counts and percentages
Funding opportunity rate	Verified grant, procurement, or policy-funding records / eligible records

9. TTO research-to-action model

Turquoise Tiospaye uses this research infrastructure to turn verified public information into practical community education, analysis, and action.

Research element	Community purpose
Community snapshot	Two pages: top developments, one verified chart, key links, and one action item.
Verified monthly brief	Eight to twelve pages: verified trends, state sections, Indigenous justice analysis, policy developments, and recommendations.
Custom research	State, tribal, or program-specific briefs for agencies, universities, foundations, and Native organizations.
Training and workshops	Media literacy, justice trends, trauma-informed practice, reentry, and community-solutions sessions based on the research.
Community action guidance	Connects verified findings to practical steps for prevention, healing, reentry, accountability, and safer communities.

Native-led interpretation and community action

This work centers Native-led verification, community interpretation, transparent research methods, and responsible analysis. Its purpose is to show what is changing, what may be overlooked, where information is incomplete, and what actions may strengthen prevention, healing, reentry, accountability, and safer communities.

Next production decision

Before the first public issue, TTO should complete a human review of the July archive, finalize the codebook, and choose the 15-25 most important verified developments. The automated workbook remains the research engine; the finished brief becomes the public educational resource.

TURQUOISE TIOSPAYE

ENGAGE • EMPOWER • TRANSFORM • HEAL

Pilot prepared from native_corrections_master_trends.xlsx
Archive last updated July 23, 2026 at 22:01 MDT