

My concern is that the children in the special education class I am tutoring will not get a fair shake by society. For instance, there is a boy in the class who is in a half-way house for drug abuse. He will be out in two weeks but he can't go home because he doesn't get along with his mother. He will move in with another teenager. He already is an old soul; one can see it in his eyes. His story rings so clear in my heart. I worry that he will drop out and not get an adequate education. *I dropped out of high school in my senior year to marry, thereby escaping a bad home life.*

The drop-out rate for Indian children is much higher than the national average (Table 1). According to the National Center for Education Statistics' Drop-out Rates in the United States, in 1988 the American Indians' drop-out rate is 35.5 percent, compared to 22.2 percent for Blacks, and 27.9 percent for Hispanics. The report also shows that they represent 3.1 percent of all dropouts despite the fact that they account for only 0.9 percent of all elementary and secondary students.

I know that culturally we are different: the Cherokee have a written language, but this is an exception; most tribes do not. History in most tribes was handed down from elder to child, by word of mouth, through stories, by songs and dances, on painted rocks and on carved totems. Due to this, our learning styles are different from cultures with