



# 2020 NATIVE MASCOTS FACT SHEET

## BACKGROUND

We are living in an unprecedented moment of solidarity, and people across the country have come together to take a stand against racism in any form. In the past week, major steps have been taken to remove racist mascots and imagery, as Aunt Jemima and Uncle Ben's have altered their branding and NASCAR has banned Confederate flags. Monuments to Confederate soldiers, Christopher Columbus, and slave traders are being toppled in cities around the world.

***BANNING THE USE OF RACIST NATIVE MASCOTS, NAMES, AND IMAGERY IN NATIONAL SPORTS LEAGUES IS THE NEXT STEP.***

## WHY ARE NATIVE MASCOTS, TEAM NAMES, AND IMAGERY AN ISSUE?

Native mascots don't honor Native people. Native mascots, team names, and imagery are racist. The name of the Washington football team is a dictionary-defined racial slur.

Scientific studies prove that Native mascots demonstrate direct negative effects on Native Americans and that these mascots activate, reflect, and/or reinforce stereotyping and prejudice among non-Native people.

## WHAT DO NATIVE AMERICANS THINK ABOUT NATIVE MASCOTS AND TEAM NAMES?

### RECENT SCIENTIFIC STUDIES SHOW THAT:

***65% OF NATIVE YOUTH 18-24 YEAR-OLDS FOUND THE WASHINGTON TEAM NAME OFFENSIVE.***

***57% OF PEOPLE WHO FEEL HIGHLY CONNECTED TO BEING NATIVE AMERICAN ARE OFFENDED BY THE WASHINGTON NFL TEAM NAME.***

***NATIVE AMERICAN MASCOTS CAUSE HIGHER RATES OF DEPRESSION, SUICIDE IDEATION, SELF-HARM, AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN NATIVE YOUTH, AND INCREASED DISCRIMINATION IN SCHOOLS AGAINST NATIVE STUDENTS.***

## WHY IS NOW THE RIGHT TIME FOR THIS CHANGE?

This debate has been happening for decades, and with the current climate and national conversations, now is the greatest shot that we have ever had to sway public opinion and demand real change.

## HOW CAN WE ERADICATE HARMFUL NATIVE MASCOTS?

If sports leagues truly want to condemn racism, as they have stated, they must eradicate Native mascots, team names, insensitive gestures and the subsequent racist behavior of fans. We are calling upon politicians, athletes, like-minded organizations, and fans to stand together to declare that racism is racism and it will no longer be tolerated.

## WHERE CAN WE LEARN MORE AND GET INVOLVED?

Visit [WWW.ILLUMINATIVES.ORG](http://WWW.ILLUMINATIVES.ORG) to learn more about the issue and how you can help.