

Figure 2 from “Collaboratively Adapting Culturally Respectful, Locally Relevant Suicide Prevention for Newly Participating Alaska Native Communities” by Wexler et al. Journal for Social Action in Counseling & Psychology, 14(1), 124-151. Shared with [CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).

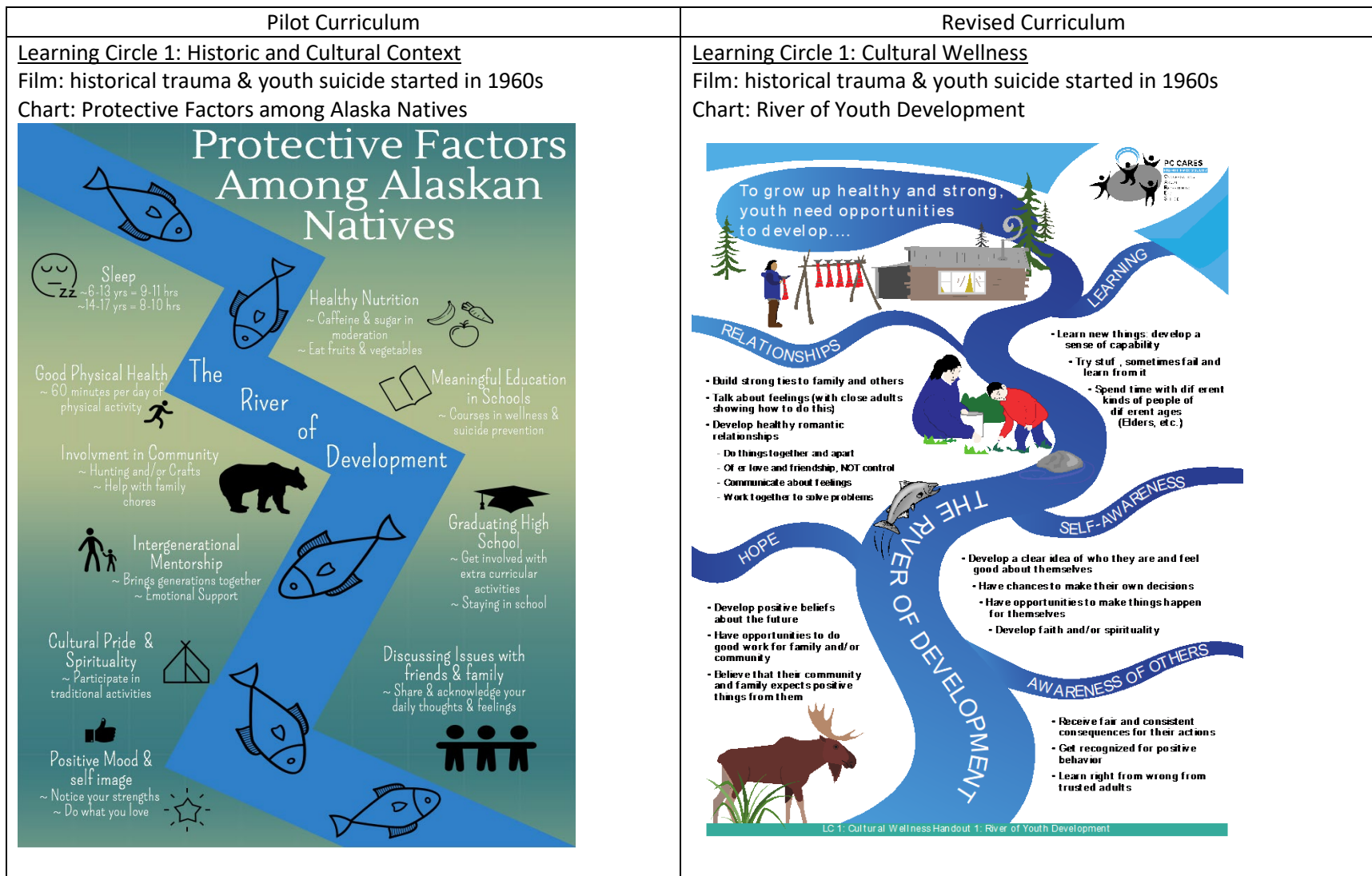


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Learning Circle 2: The Role of Adults

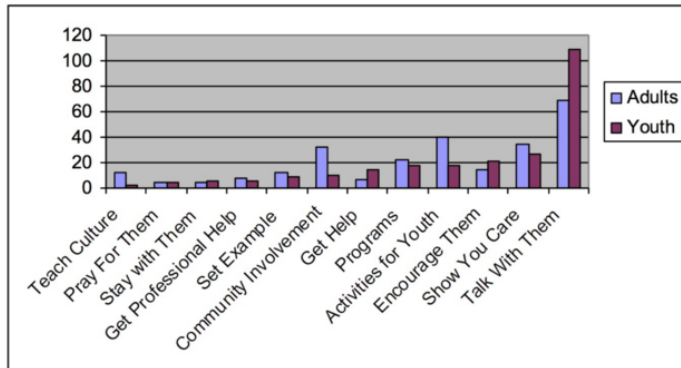
Chart: Protective factors for youth suicide prevention

Guess what Inupiaq youth & adults think is most helpful in preventing suicide? (These ideas came from 355 local people)

- **Teach culture**
- **Pray for them**
- **Stay with them**
- **Get professional help**
- **Set a good example**
- **Being involved in the community**
- **Getting them help**
- **Programs**
- **Activities for youth**
- **Encourage them**
- **Show you care**
- **Talk with them**

What will help prevent Inupiaq youth suicide?

On a Survey representing 355 people in Northwest Alaska, youth & adults wrote:
(Wexler & Goodwin, 2006)



Learning Circle 2: Support for Youth

Graph: What Youth and Adults Say Prevents Suicide



Youth and adults in Northwest Alaska wrote their ideas in response to this question. Answers people wrote were grouped together when it sounded like they had the same idea.

ended



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Learning Circle 5: Supportive Counseling and Listening Well
 Film: Supportive counseling as prevention – Just listen



[Above: video thumbnail - Talking and Listening for Wellness]

Role play: Listening for Wellness

CHEAT SHEET FOR LISTENING FOR WELLNESS

Talker: Tells the listener about the stressor

Listener:

1. Invite conversations from the heart
 →Show acceptance and willingness to listen.
 “Tell me about what is going on for you.”
 “Talk to me about your stress.”
 “Want to talk about it?”
2. LISTEN
 DO NOT interrupt,
 DO NOT give advice,
 DO NOT try to cheer them up...just listen.
3. Reflect back what you heard
 “It sounds like it is really hard for you when....”
 “You get really stressed when...”
 “Sounds like [XYZ] is really hard to deal with.”
4. Ask open-ended questions about next steps:
 “What do you want to do about it?”
 “How have you handled this before?”
 “What can you do to get through this?”

Chart: School Survey Results (not pictured)
 Role play: Listening for Wellness

Cheat Sheet for Listening for Wellness

SLIDE 13

1. Invite conversations from the heart
 →Show acceptance and willingness to listen.
 “Tell me about what is going on for you.”
 “Talk to me about your stress.”
 “Want to talk about it?”
2. LISTEN
 DO NOT interrupt,
 DO NOT give advice,
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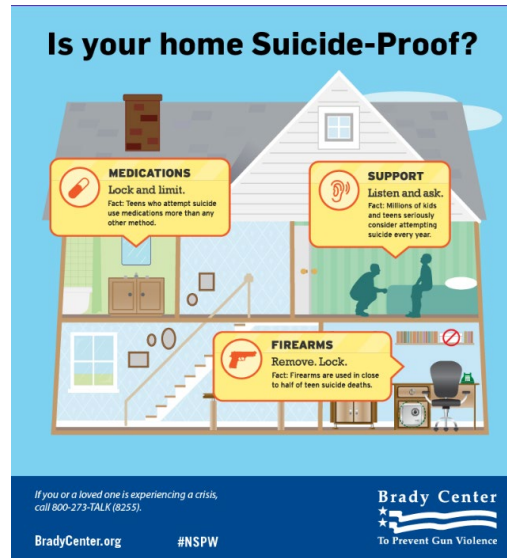
Learning Circle 6: Restricting Lethal Means

Image: 10 Minutes Can Save a Life



Research shows that making it harder for someone to find a loaded gun, a private place, pills, a bridge, alcohol, a snow machine keys... **CAN SAVE A LIFE!**
 →Even a few-minute delay can prevent suicide.

New Material: Safe Homes



Learning Circle 3: Prevention

Flyer: Safe homes



#1 10 MINUTES CAN SAVE A LIFE. Research shows that making it harder for someone to find a loaded gun, a private place, pills, a bridge, alcohol, a snow machine keys... **CAN SAVE A LIFE!**
 Even a few-minute delay can prevent suicide.

#2 SIMPLE CHANGES TO THE HOME can help someone we're worried about. Here's how...

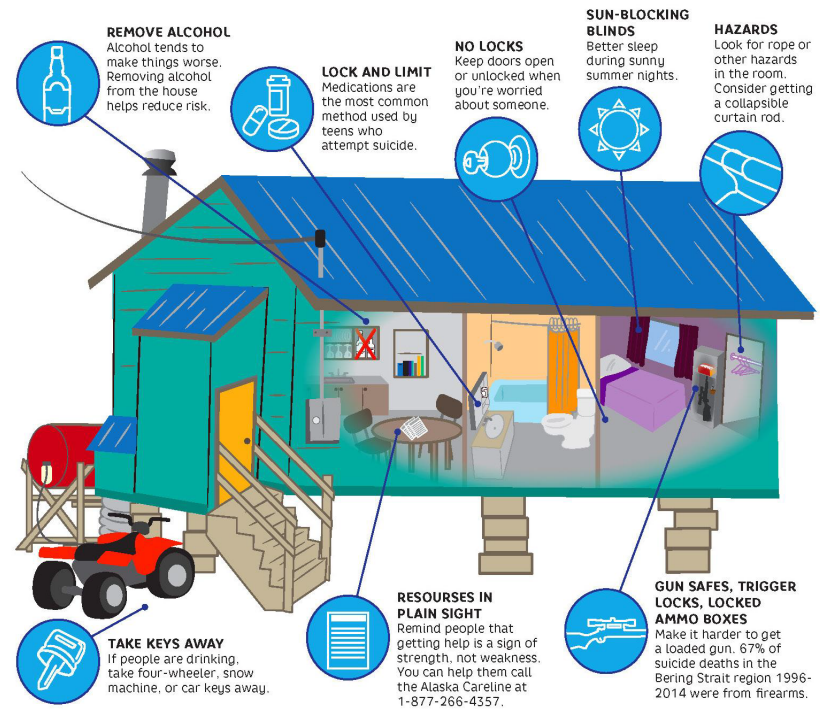


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<p>Learning Circle 7: Support After an Attempt Case study: Following up after suicide attempts</p> <p>When ‘Jane Doe’ came home from Kotzebue after attempting suicide, she was embarrassed and still had to deal with the problems that made her feel bad in the first place. It was hard. ‘Jane Doe’ felt alone and sad. She didn’t know how to talk about what happened, and she wasn’t sure she wanted to because of her shame.</p> <p>When she received a short text message a day after saying, “You are special.” ‘Jane Doe’ felt supported, even though it was from someone she isn’t close to. A few days later, when she got a text saying, “Thinking of you today,” she smiled and thought about those people in the community who care about her.</p> <p>Weeks later, when she gets a text message, “wishing you a good day,” she gets a warm feeling. When she is down, she thinks about this feeling and it helps.</p> <p>Now, many months later, ‘Jane Doe’ sometimes gets a supportive text from this same person, and it reminds her that people care about her, even if she isn’t close to them. It gives her a way to get help if she needs it in the future.</p>	<p>Flyer: Small Acts of Kindness</p> <p>What Works? Small Acts of Kindness!</p> <p>Research note: In studies, people who received short, supportive and <i>non-demanding</i> notes or acts of kindness after feeling suicidal and low were much more likely to seek help, not attempt or die by suicide, when compared to people who didn’t get these (Motto & Bostrom, 2001; Ranney, Pisani, & Chernick, 2018; Reger, et. al. 2017).</p> <p>What does ‘non-demanding’ mean? It means to do something without expecting the other person to do anything. For example:</p> <p>Ø Demanding act: <i>“Call me if you want to talk.”</i></p> <p>⇒ Better to do Non-demanding: <i>“I am thinking of you and want you to know I care.”</i> <i>“I really appreciate the way you _____.”</i> <i>“I baked some cookies and wanted you to have some.”</i></p> <p>Suicide prevention can mean making sure to send someone who is having a hard time random, small, non-demanding notes and acts of kindness over a long time. And, research shows that you don’t need to be close to the person to make a big difference to someone.</p> <p><i>“Whatever it is you want from young people, you must give them.”</i> - Anonymous Alaskan</p> <p><i>“Kindness is a gift everyone can afford to give.”</i> -Unknown</p> <p><i>“Love is what makes you smile when you’re tired.”</i> - Terri, age 4 (From Helping Little Kids Succeed - Alaska Style).</p> <p><i>“A healthy village is a circle whose people are safe within its fold. Love, understanding, kindness, culture, history, goals, and truth make the circle strong...”</i> - Harold Napoleon, Yu’pik author and activist</p> <p><i>“Love and kindness are never wasted. They always make a difference. They bless the one who receives them, and they bless you, the giver.”</i> - Barbara De Angelis</p> <p><small>U.S. Department of Health & Human Services 2019 Small Acts of Kindness Handbook</small></p>
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Learning Circle 8: Postvention: Talking Safely About Suicide

Chart: Postvention: What to do /not to do to

POSTVENTION	
After a suicide happens, everyone—especially young people—are at higher risk for suicide. This is what we know about actions and words that can either protect them or increase suicide risk:	
Protective	Riskier
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let those who are grieving talk about <u>whatever</u> they are going through (anger, guilt, sadness, numbness...). Share ways of getting help: <p>“If only he knew that it feels better after talking.”</p> <p>“There are other ways to get help; even calling a hotline can make someone feel a sense of relief.”</p> Tell basic facts [no details on how], only: <p>“[Name] was 19, from X village and died yesterday”.</p> Share the hurt caused by the person’s passing: <p>“Suicide hurts”.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blaming someone else for the suicide increases risk because... <p>...People listening may feel angry and desperate, and could think about suicide as a way to get revenge or as a way to hurt someone else.</p> Talking about the person who died as a “<i>successful suicide</i>” or being “<i>in a better place</i>” or “<i>at peace</i>” can increase suicide risk because.... <p>...Suicide could seem desirable for those who are having a hard time finding peace or believing things can get better in their life.</p> Dedicating a tournament or making T-shirts in honor of a person who died by suicide can increase suicide risk for youth because... <p>...Young people who feel overlooked may see suicide as a way to attention and love.</p>

Learning Circle 4: Grief and Healing

Poster Activity: Stages of Grief

Chart: What Can Hurt and What Helps Healing

How to Help After A Suicide	
After a suicide happens, everyone—especially young people—are at higher risk for suicide. Families, communities, and institutions can respond in ways that can help and hurt.	
CAN HURT	HELPS HEALING
<p> People can hurt others by...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blaming someone else for the suicide. This increases risk because... <p>...people listening may feel angry and be looking for a way out, and could think about suicide as a way to get revenge or to hurt someone else.</p> Talking about the person who died as a “successful suicide” or being “in a better place” or “at peace” because.... <p>...suicide could seem desirable for those who are having a hard time finding peace or believing things can get better in their life.</p> Not talking about it. Pretending it didn’t happen. While it may seem like the right thing to do to “protect” youth, ignoring a suicide is risky because... <p>...all people, especially young people, need a time and place to talk about their feelings when a friend or family member dies by suicide.</p> 	<p> People can help by...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing ways of getting help: <p>“If only he knew that it feels better after talking.”</p> <p>“There are other ways to get help; even calling a hotline can make someone feel a sense of relief.”</p> Talking safely about suicide by telling only the basic facts [without details of how or why]: <p>“[Name] was 19, from X village, and died by suicide.”</p> Sharing the hurt caused by the person’s passing: <p>“Suicide hurts”</p> Making time to listen well: <p>“I am here to listen and support you.”</p> Letting those who are grieving talk about <u>whatever</u> they are going through (anger, guilt, sadness, numbness, etc.).
<p> Communities can hurt by...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talking about the suicide as if it were a ‘normal’ incident, for example, “His girlfriend broke up with him and he killed himself.” <p>...Youth may hear those stories and think of suicide as something to do if they break-up with their boy/girlfriend.</p> Dedicating a community event, or making T-shirts in honor of a person who died by suicide because... <p>...young people who feel overlooked may see suicide as a way to get attention and love.</p> 	<p> Communities can help by...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hosting weekly support groups for people to share whatever they are going through. Reminding everyone to lock up their guns (or make sure the bullets are out), put away alcohol pills after a suicide. Making sure that the funeral, memorial display, and services are the same as they would be for a non-suicide death. Reaching out to the survivors of suicide: <p>“It’s no one’s fault”</p>
<p> Institutions can hurt by...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not taking action to prevent another suicide <p>...Talking <u>safely</u> about suicide does <u>not</u> increase risk, and youth need adults at school to acknowledge the tragedy to help them get through it.</p> Ignoring community protocols <p>... This disempowers communities (and the people in them) at a time when they most need their strong traditions, culture and sense of control in order to heal.</p> 	<p> Institutions can help by...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Debriefing the event with first responders, law enforcement, and healthcare providers. Schools having a plan for what to do after a suicide death, which includes talking to students about the suicide safely, teaching about grief, and making time for healing. Following community guidance and leadership

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**Learning Circle 9:
Review and Moving
Forward**

Posters: Review and moving forward – What do communities want to do next?

**Learning Circle 5: Review and Next Steps
Posters: What do we want to do next?**

Handout: Learning Circle Summary

Handout:
Individual and Community Change Discussion questions

Learning Circles 1-4 Review

<p>Learning Circle 1: Cultural Wellness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alaska Native and Inuit youth suicide used to be rare in the past and now it is way too common. Rates of suicide have increased since the 1960's and are tied to colonization. Even though a lot has changed in our communities, what youth need for healthy personal development has not changed. Youth still need environments that foster learning, positive relationships, awareness of others, self-awareness, and hope. Just like we take care of the rivers and land, families, organizations, and community groups all have roles for creating this healthy environment for youth development. 	<p>Learning Circle 2: Support for Youth & Everyday Caring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth and adults were asked what they think will best prevent suicide, and many youth simply said, "talk to us." Over half of BSSD students have 3 or more trusted adults that can go to with an important problem. Two-thirds of BSSD students feel supported by adults in the schools. Listening for wellness means showing acceptance and willingness to listen, without interrupting or trying to cheer someone up. You can help someone feel understood by reflecting back what you heard, and ask open-ended questions rather than giving advice. We can use these skills to be a good listener with youth. 	<p>Learning Circle 3: Prevention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suicide risk can look different, but there are some common signals someone might be at risk. For example, drinking more than usual or fighting with people close to him or her. Time matters! One of the most important first steps if you are worried about someone is to make sure they cannot easily get a loaded gun. Suicide is often impulsive. If you can make it 30 minutes harder for someone to take suicidal action, you can save a life. Research shows that making one's home safer by keeping bullets located separately from guns and both locked away can prevent suicide. Small, non-demanding messages and acts of kindness can also reduce risk. For example, "I am thinking of you and I want you to know I care." 	<p>Learning Circle 4: Grief and Healing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> After a suicide happens, everyone—especially young people—are at higher risk for suicide. Families, communities, and institutions can respond in ways that could help, or could increase risk. Talking safely about suicide means sharing only the basic facts, rather than talking about how or why someone killed themselves. Giving youth and adults a non-judgmental place like a support group to talk about what they're feeling helps people heal. Blaming, pretending it didn't happen, or having memorial displays and services different from a non-suicide death can be harmful. Grief after a suicide can take longer to heal from and be more complicated. Everyone experiences the stages of grief differently.
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11/23/2020 10:00 AM ACTIVITY 1: Learning Circles 1-4 Review Handout

Individual/Family Level Questions

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (10 mins)

1. What do you think helped you keep participating in PC CARES?
2. What kinds of prevention or wellness actions have you taken?
3. What helped you remember to do those things?
4. How do you think you could pass on some of what you learned to others?

Community/Organization Level

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (10 mins)

1. What community groups and organizations in this community (for example, Norton Sound, Kowewak, BSSD, Traditional Council, school...) should be a part of prevention and wellness?
2. What kind of support from organizations (Norton Sound, Kowewak, BSSD, Traditional Council, etc.) do you think mattered most in making PC CARES happen here?
3. What should these organizations or community groups know about how they can work effectively to prevent suicide and promote health?
4. How might these community groups and organizations be involved in prevention and wellness moving forward?

11/23/2020 10:00 AM ACTIVITY 3: Making Connections: Community and Individual Discussion Questions Handout