



PROTECTIVE PROGRAMS

TO SUPPORT NATIVE YOUTH

This resource presents findings from the 2023 New Mexico Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey (NM-YRRS) – a biennial, anonymous, school-based survey administered to middle and high school students across New Mexico. Information has also been included on some of the programs offered through the Albuquerque Area Indian Health Board (AAIHB) designed to support American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) youth and adults working with AI/AN youth.

These resources are offered at NO COST. To learn more please visit aaihb.org.

This fact sheet explores the relationship between protective factors and health outcomes among New Mexico high school and middle school AI/AN Youth.

PROTECTIVE FACTORS can minimize the exposure to or impact of negative events, leading to more positive health outcomes and behaviors.

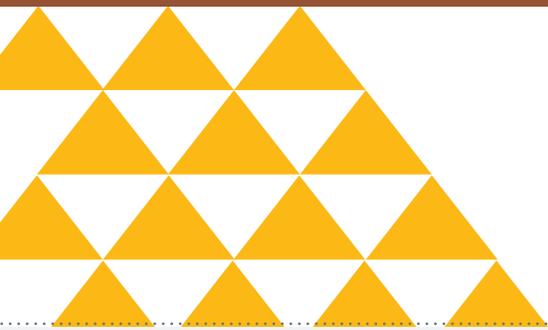
RESILIENCE FACTORS are often viewed as an internal buffer to the experience of harmful external circumstances.

Resilience factors collected in the NM-YRRS focus on self-efficacy and self-esteem. However, the expectation of resilience in youth can harmfully turn the blame from the systems or circumstances causing adverse experiences onto the individual for not being able to handle them.¹ The AAIHB offers programs to increase positive health outcomes on a structural level for schools and community, while also promoting development of self-esteem and self-efficacy through programs directly for youth.



Brought to you by the Albuquerque Area Southwest Tribal Epidemiology Center
within the Albuquerque Indian Health Board.





RELATIONSHIPS AS PROTECTIVE FACTORS

HIGH SCHOOL



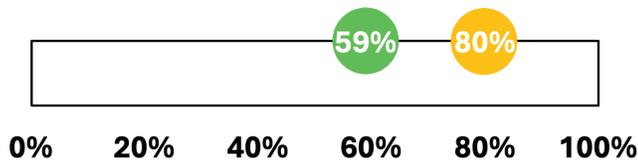
Nearly 3 out of 10 high schoolers reported symptoms of either anxiety* or depression*



1 out of 10 high school students reported attempted suicide in the past 12 months

SUPPORTIVE PARENTS

What % of students do not experience mental health symptoms if they have supportive parents or guardians at home?



With supportive adult relationships at home, 80% reported no symptoms of depression*

Without supportive adult relationships at home, 59% reported no symptoms of depression*

SUPPORTIVE ADULTS AT SCHOOL

What % of students do not experience mental health symptoms if they have supportive adults at school?

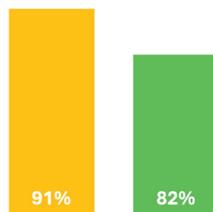


With supportive adult relationships at school, 79% reported no symptoms of anxiety*

Without supportive adult relationships at school, 67% reported no symptoms of anxiety*

SUPPORTIVE PEERS

What % of students do not experience mental health symptoms if they have supportive peers?

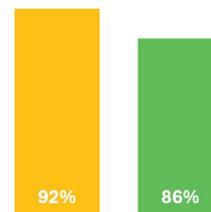


With supportive peer relationships, 91% reported no past suicide attempt**

Without supportive peer relationships, 82% reported no past suicide attempt**

SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

What % of students do not experience mental health symptoms if they have supportive adults outside of school and home?



With supportive community relationships, 92% reported no past suicide attempt**

Without supportive community relationships, 86% reported no past suicide attempt**

*Past two weeks, **Past 12 months, ***Ever

Note: Symptoms of anxiety and depression are based on responses to questions from the widely used Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD-2) screen and the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-2) tools respectively.

Having supportive parents, adults at school, peers, and community are associated with positive health outcomes among youth. The AAIHB offers programs for adults working with youth, whether as parents, teachers, caregivers, community, coaches, doctors, or any other role.

MIDDLE SCHOOL



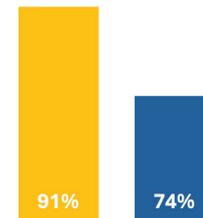
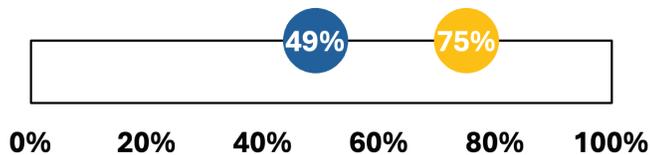
3 out of 10 middle schoolers reported symptoms of either anxiety* or depression*



Over 1 in 10 middle schoolers reported past suicide attempt ever

SUPPORTIVE PARENTS

What % of students do not experience mental health symptoms if they have supportive parents or guardians at home?



With supportive adult relationships at home, 75% reported no symptoms of depression*

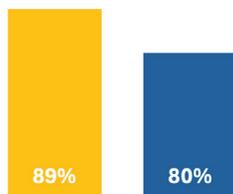
Without supportive adult relationships at home, 49% reported no symptoms of depression*

With supportive adult relationships at home, 91% reported no past suicide attempt***

Without supportive adult relationships at home, 74% reported past suicide attempt***

SUPPORTIVE PEERS

What % of students do not experience mental health symptoms if they have supportive peers?



With supportive peer relationships, 89% reported no past suicide attempt***

Without supportive peer relationships, 80% reported no past suicide attempt***

SUPPORTIVE ADULTS AT SCHOOL

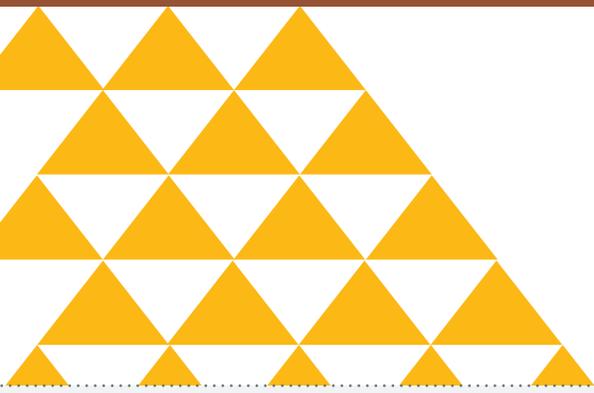
What % of students do not experience mental health symptoms if they have supportive adults at school?



With supportive adult relationships at school, 71% reported no symptoms of anxiety*

Without supportive adult relationships at school, 65% reported no symptoms of anxiety*

*Past two weeks, **Past 12 months, ***Ever



PROGRAMS

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS OFFERED THROUGH AAIHB

WORKSHOP: APPLIED SUICIDE INTERVENTION SKILLS TRAINING (ASIST)

A 2-day long suicide first aid training. In-depth intervention training to be able to help someone with thoughts of suicide develop a safety plan. This course prepares participants to work with a person at risk when a counselor is not available.

Audience: Ages 16+

TRAINING: QUESTION, PERSUADE, REFER (QPR) TRAINING

This course guides participants in how to communicate with someone experiencing thoughts of suicide and how to connect them with help.

Audience: Middle School and older (Age 12+)

WORKSHOP: safeTALK

About: A 2-4-hour long training on how to talk about suicide, and how to communicate with someone experiencing thoughts of suicide and connect them with help.

Audience: High School and older (Age 15+)

TRAINING: YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

A full-day training on how to support youth who are having a mental health challenge and connect them with help.

Audience: Adults (18+) working with youth

TRAINING: CONNECT POSTVENTION

Various trainings with advocates mobilizing into a community to provide resources in the event there is a death by suicide experienced by the community. This program also offers support in developing a protocol or tangible document of the community's response plan, preparing communities for navigating the impact of suicide in a community.

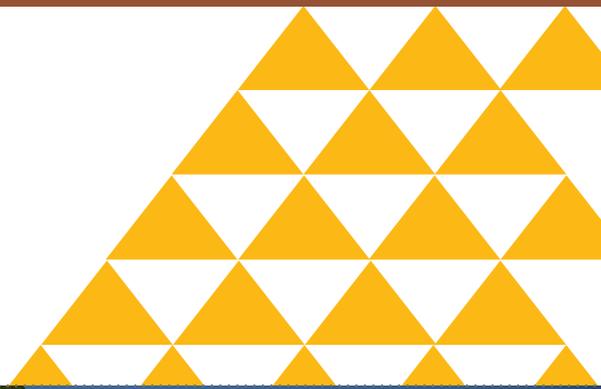
Audience: Anyone, whether or not a suicide has taken place in a community.



Access all programs by visiting the Community Health Education and Resiliency Program (CHERP) page on the AAIHB website:
<https://www.aaih.org/training-request-form/>

ANNUAL SUMMIT

FOR ALL ADULTS WORKING
WITH AI/AN YOUTH



REIMAGINE YOUTH WELLNESS: A CARING ADULTS SUMMIT

The Reimagine Youth Wellness: A Caring Adults Summit is an annual summit focused on innovative ways to support youth in Native communities with the underlying goal of reducing risks related to suicide and substance use.

The purpose of the summit is two-fold:

- 1) to educate adults who work with Native youth about programs, strategies, models, and frameworks that promote positive outcomes for youth; and
- 2) to build community and strengthen our networks for supporting each other in this work.

Audience:

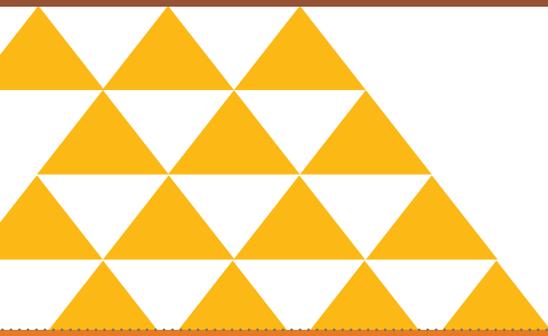
Adults who work with youth including educators, administrators, coaches, after-school program staff, social workers, caregivers, and more.

Access:

Register on AAIHB website: <https://www.aaihb.org/ryws/>

Contact:

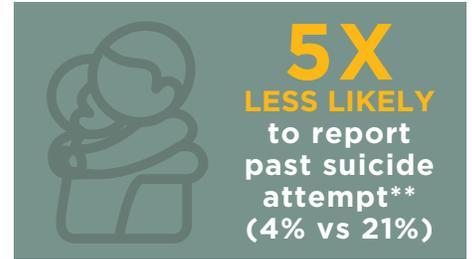
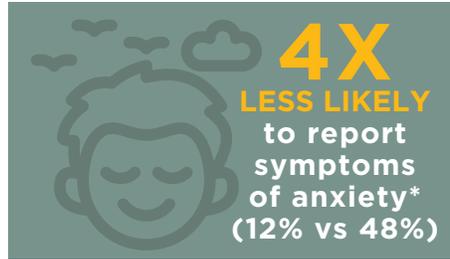
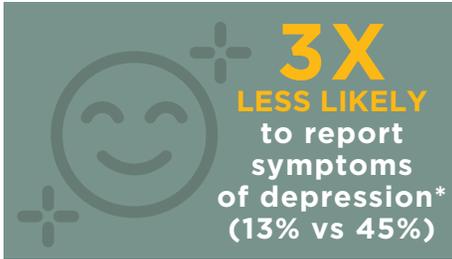
Tony Quintana: aquintana@aaihb.org (CHERP)



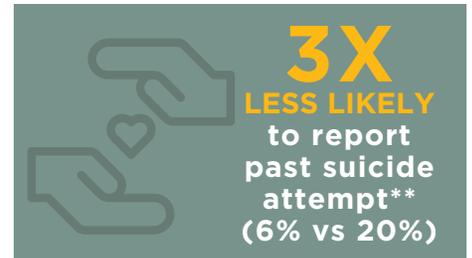
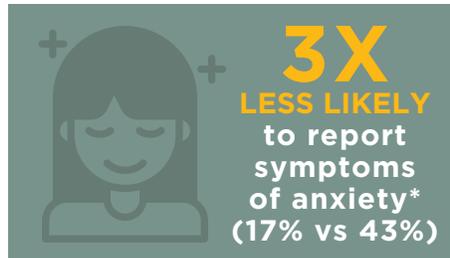
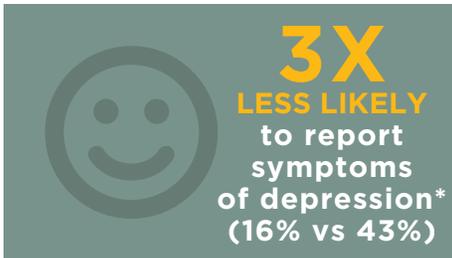
REINFORCING INTERNAL WELLBEING

HIGH SCHOOL

WHEN STUDENTS FEEL GOOD ABOUT WHO THEY ARE AS A PERSON THEY ARE...

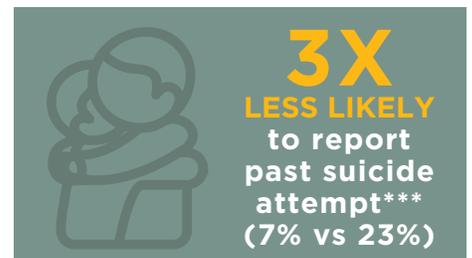
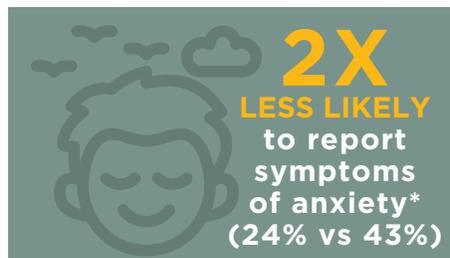
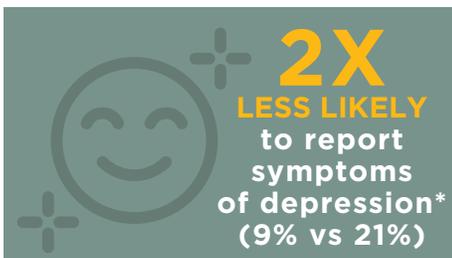


WHEN STUDENTS FEEL HOPEFUL AND OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THEIR FUTURE THEY ARE...

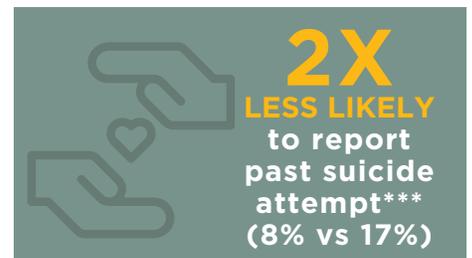
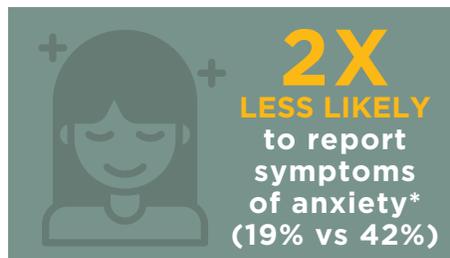
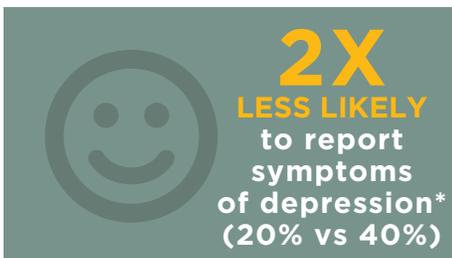


MIDDLE SCHOOL

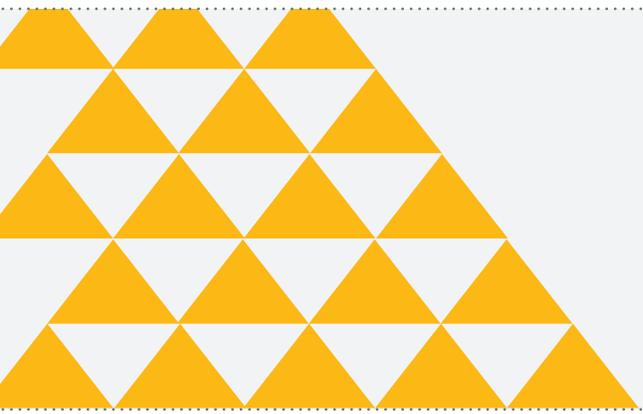
WHEN STUDENTS FEEL THEY HAVE DIRECTION AND PURPOSE IN LIFE THEY ARE...



WHEN STUDENTS STATED THEY ARE GOOD AT COPING THEY ARE...



The NM-YRRS allows students to share their feelings of self-esteem and self-efficacy through questions related to resilience. Self-esteem and self-efficacy are associated with positive mental health outcomes. The AAIHB offers programs to increase leadership skills, confidence, social skills, and other areas of empowerment among middle and high school AI/AN youth.



PROGRAMS

REINFORCING INTERNAL WELLBEING

EQUINE ASSISTED PSYCHOTHERAPY

The AAIHB partners with Equine Therapeutic Connections (ETC) to serve the needs of AI/AN youth through equine assisted psychotherapy (EAP). EAP is a non-traditional experiential therapy which guides the clients to learn about themselves and others through the use of horses. This effective and unique therapeutic method serves to facilitate internal healing and a sense of well-being for youth and their families.

Audience: AI/AN youth who are 12- 18 years old (6-12th grade)

EQUINE ASSISTED LEARNING

A professional-led, ground-based development program for youth to learn life skills, effective communication, build leadership qualities, build self-efficacy and confidence, and learn about themselves while interacting with horses. This youth program includes discussion and facilitated activities with horses.

Audience: : AI/AN youth who are 12- 18 years old (6-12th grade)

PROJECT VENTURE

Project Venture promotes positive youth development by merging Indigenous values with outdoor activities, fostering resilience. Year-round activities, such as mountain biking, hiking, and outdoor survival skills, deepen ancestral connections to nature while enhancing self-esteem, problem-solving skills, and leadership qualities.

Audience: AI/AN youth who are 12- 18 years old (6-12th grade)

Contact: Sheri Pfeiffer-Tsinajinnie - (spfeiffertsinajinnie@projectventure.org)



Access all programs above by visiting the Sowing Seeds of Wellness (SOW) page on the AAIHB website, or by contacting Kylie Cayedito: kcayedito@aaihb.org (SOW)



CREATING

A POSITIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

As youth go through major developmental changes in their life, most of their time is spent in school. A school environment can largely influence the experiences and lifestyle of growing people.² While many of the programs previously mentioned can be applied in school settings, the programs below are offered to school staff or students, specifically in a school setting.

HIGH SCHOOL

WHEN STUDENTS HAVE A SUPPORTIVE ADULT AT SCHOOL,

They were **30% more likely** to report feeling confident that they could achieve their goals in life (49% vs 79%).

WHEN STUDENTS FEEL THERE ARE CLEAR RULES AT SCHOOL,

They were **26% more likely** to report feeling engaged in daily activity (51% vs 77%).

They were **11% less likely** to skip school in the past 30 days due to feeling unsafe (12% vs 23%).

They were **10% less likely** to get in a physical fight** (14% vs 24%).

MIDDLE SCHOOL

WHEN STUDENTS HAVE A SUPPORTIVE ADULT AT SCHOOL,

They were **28% more likely** to report feeling confident that they could achieve their goals in life (50% vs 78%).

WHEN STUDENTS FEEL THERE ARE CLEAR RULES AT SCHOOL,

They were **20% more likely** to report feeling engaged in daily activity (53% vs 73%).

They were **14% less likely** to report getting in a physical fight at school*** (33% vs 47%).

PROGRAMS

TO CREATE A POSITIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

TRAUMA INFORMED POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Facilitated sessions between CHERP and schools and other youth serving organizations to adapt or develop policies to support student wellbeing informed by youth data, trauma-informed practices, and strengths-based approaches.

Audience: School leaders, administrators, and youth program leaders

Contact: Tony Quintana, aquintana@aaihb.org (CHERP)

SUBSTANCE USE EDUCATION

The AAIHB offers events and training around substance use education at middle and high schools serving AI/AN youth.

Audience: This program can be requested by school staff for themselves and students in 6th-12th grade.

Kylie Cayedito: kcayedito@aaihb.org (SOW)

¹Fisher, J. & Jones, E. (2024) The problem with resilience. *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, 33, 185-188. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1111/inm.13220>
²Protective Factors in Schools | *Healthy Schools* | CDC. (2022, July 14). https://archive.cdc.gov/www_cdc_gov/healthyschools/protective_factors_schools.htm