ALASKA: Research Highlights Northwest Alaska’s Suicide Prevention Work

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The Arctic Sounder [1]

A recent research article highlights the suicide prevention efforts of indigenous communities in Northwest Alaska. The region has seen a reduction in youth suicide rates since the 1990s, which the authors partly attribute to its comprehensive, community-based prevention approach leveraging local strengths. Programs that may have had the most impact were built from the grassroots, relying on local knowledge and buy-in from community stakeholders. “These endeavors reflect local sensibilities, community strengths, and traditional culture, and underscore self-determination in conceptualizing and implementing community wellness initiatives,” the study noted. The authors also call attention to programs in the region that have addressed suicide at multiple levels of the community, including health care systems, schools, and tribal organizations. “This finding offers reasons to celebrate,” they wrote. “The multifaceted efforts undertaken by Northwest Alaska seem to be having a positive impact on youth suicidal behavior in the remote and rural Inupiat region.”

Spark Extra! Read the full article [2].

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