



Suicide Rate for Native American Women Is Up 139%

June 28, 2019

News Type: Weekly Spark, Weekly Spark News

[USA Today](#) [1]

New [federal data](#) [2] show that the U.S. suicide rate has risen since 1999, with the largest increase among Native American women. Experts suggest that experiences of trauma, poverty, and limited access to mental health care could place American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) at higher risk for suicide. AI/AN women also experience more violence than average, including sexual assault and intimate partner violence. Addressing these risk factors is critical to preventing suicide, say experts, but enhancing protective factors is also important. For example, suicide attempt survivor Shelby Rowe has found that connecting with her Chickasaw Nation heritage has helped her heal. “Despite all of the things that tribes have endured, we’re still here,” said Karen Hearod, a member of the Choctaw Nation and regional administrator at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. “There is strength and resilience we can find in that.”

Spark Extra! Learn [suicide surveillance strategies for AI/AN communities](#) [3].

Links within this resource

[1] <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2019/06/21/suicide-rate-native-american-indian-women-men-since-1999/1524007001/>

[2] https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hestat/suicide/rates_1999_2017.htm

[3] <http://www.sprc.org/resources-programs/suicide-surveillance-strategies-american-indian-alaska-native-communities>

Printed on 04/17/2021 from <https://sprc.org/news/suicide-rate-native-american-women-139>