



Preventing Suicide in Yup'ik Youth

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A community-based intervention that promotes culturally generated reasons for life and sobriety may be a useful tool to protect Alaska Native youth from suicide risk, particularly when implemented at a greater intensity (i.e., when youth participated in a larger number of intervention activities or modules).

Yup'ik youth in southwest Alaska participated in the Qungasvik intervention, a strengths-based, 26-module cultural intervention that uses local expertise and practices to promote reasons for life and sobriety. Because the intervention allows for local autonomy when selecting the number and type of module, youth in one community were exposed to a larger number of modules (mean of 6.78) than youth in a second community (mean of 2.31). Researchers explored whether the number of modules affected youth reflection on the potential negative consequences of drinking (i.e., *umyuangcaryaraq*) and reasons for living (i.e., *yuuyaraqegtaar*).

Researchers found that youth exposed to a larger number of modules demonstrated significant increases in reasons for living compared to youth exposed to a smaller number of modules.

Although this was a nonrandomized study, results suggest that the Qungasvik model may be a promising approach to preventing suicide in Yup'ik youth. More research is needed to see if this model can be adapted to other Alaska Native cultures with similar results.

Allen, J., Rasmus, S. M., Fok, C. C. T., Charles, B., Henry, D., & Qungasvik Team. (2018). Multi-level cultural intervention for the prevention of suicide and alcohol use risk with Alaska Native youth: A nonrandomized comparison of treatment intensity. *Prevention Science*, 19(2), 174–185.

Spark Extra! Learn more about [Yup'ik prevention efforts](#) [1].

Links within this resource

[1] <https://www.sprc.org/news/qasgiq-model-alaska-native-suicide-alcohol-abuse-prevention>

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