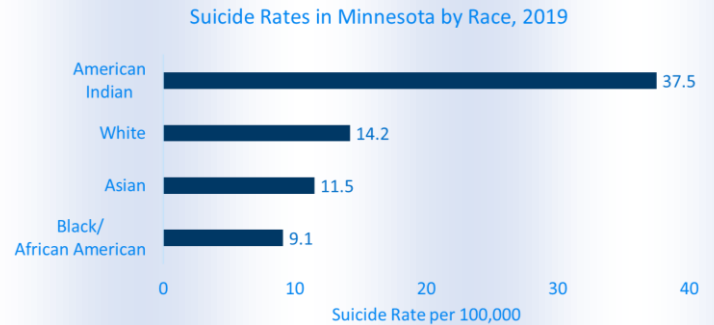




# Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Suicide Prevention Fact Sheet

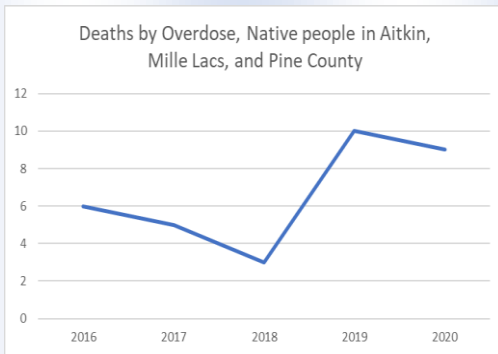
## Suicide is an urgent issue in our community locally and for American Indians across the state

- American Indians have the highest rate of suicide in Minnesota.
- Aitkin County is ranked 1st in Minnesota for the highest suicide rate of any county<sup>1</sup>; Mille Lacs County ranks in the top five; Pine County 13<sup>th</sup>.<sup>2</sup>
- The leading means/method of suicide amongst American Indians in Minnesota is suffocation (68%).



## Prevention efforts must focus on youth

- Youth ages 15-34 make up 55% of people who die by suicide among American Indians in Minnesota.
- **Native youth are struggling with depression** (58% of Native youth in Mille Lacs, 67% in Pine) and **anxiety**.
- Youth are struggling with suicide ideation (35% of Native youth in Mille Lacs, 55% in Pine) and suicide attempts.
- **However, Native youth more frequently reported participation in an out of school time activities and programs- that's a strong foundation we can build off of.**



## Suicide and substance use are connected issues

From 2016-2020<sup>3</sup>, thirty-three Native people died by overdose in connection with Aitkin, Mille Lacs, and Pine County, with increases in 2019 and 2020. Statewide, overdose deaths increased in 2019 and 2020. Substance use isn't criminal- these are our relatives struggling with mental health. Students who think adults in their community's care about them are less likely to report past month alcohol use, marijuana use, and prescription drug misuse.

## What does this mean?

- Suicide is preventable.
- We have an opportunity to build support systems for our youth, to make sure youth know they are cared about and have an important role in the community.

***What can we do to build protective factors to make sure kids feel like adults in the community care about them?***

***How can we support parents and families develop dialogues to show their kids they are loved?***

- Many people are desensitized to the overdoses as death can feel so heavy around us.

***How do we recognize that mental health and substance use go hand in hand, and destigmatize substance use and mental health so people can access support?***

- Moving forward, we will work to support the creation and implementation of a roadmap to ensure the whole community knows how to intervene and help someone, and a spectrum of culturally specific mental health care services are available to support our community.

<sup>1</sup> Age adjusted suicide rate, 2015-2019; 34.2 per 100,000 people in population.

<sup>2</sup> Age adjusted suicide rate, 2015-2019; 24.1 per 100,000 people in population. Pine County ranks at 13<sup>th</sup> with a rate of 19.1.

<sup>3</sup> Preliminary 2020 data only. This number may increase when final data is available.

The following tables highlight key indicators related to suicide and well-being for youth in 9<sup>th</sup> grade from the Minnesota Student Survey by county and school district:

### Key Youth Indicators by County (9<sup>th</sup> graders) 2019 - American Indian Youth Only<sup>4</sup>

	Mille Lacs Native Youth	Mille Lacs All youth	Pine Native Youth	Pine All youth
<b>Mental Health &amp; Treatment</b>				
Reporting any long-term mental health, behavioral or emotional problems	56%	33%	36%	30%
Treated for a mental health, emotional or behavioral problem during last year	32%	19%	14%	14%
Likely depression	58%	30%	67%	33%
Likely anxiety	55%	35%	50%	36%
<b>Suicide Attempts &amp; Ideation, in the past 12 months</b>				
Any Self-harm	33%	20%	48%	24%
Considered Suicide	35%	19%	55%	22%
Attempted Suicide	20%	7%	23%	7%
<b>Protective Factors</b>				
Teachers/other adults at school care ('Very much' or 'Quite a bit')	10%	36%	38%	37%
Adults in the community care ('Very much' or 'Quite a bit')	7%	30%	21%	30%
Youth participate in any form of programming in a typical week	91%	72%	90%	68%

Native 9<sup>th</sup> grade youth who participated in the Minnesota Student Survey in Mille Lacs and Pine county more frequently reported long term mental health problems, anxiety and depressive symptoms in the last two weeks, self-harming behaviors, and suicide considerations and attempts as compared to all youth in those same counties. Because of limited numbers of 9<sup>th</sup> grade Native youth who completed the survey, data specific to Aitkin county is not publicly available.

### Key Youth Indicators by School District (9<sup>th</sup> graders), 2019 - All Youth<sup>5</sup>

	Aitkin	Onamia	Milaca	East Central	Hinckley- Finlayson	McGregor	MN Overall
<b>Mental Health &amp; Treatment</b>							
Reporting any long-term mental health, behavioral or emotional problems.	17%	53%	26%	30%	32%	33%	23%
Treated for a mental health, emotional or behavioral problem during last year	14%	29%	17%	17%	13%	24%	15%
<b>Suicide Attempts &amp; Ideation, in the past 12 months</b>							
Any Self-harm	11%	24%	23%	28%	38%	21%	18%
Considered Suicide	30%	28%	20%	31%	25%	12%	13%
Attempted Suicide	7%	15%	6%	3%	12%	11%	4%
<b>Protective Factors</b>							
Teachers/other adults at school care ('Very much' or 'Quite a bit')	50%	12%	35%	36%	35%	32%	42%
Adults in the community care ('Very much' or 'Quite a bit')	56%	12%	22%	35%	21%	42%	38%

Very few Native youth in Mille Lacs county reported caring teachers and community adults. All youth in Aitkin county more commonly reported caring adults and less commonly reported self-harming behaviors, suicide attempts, and mental, emotional, or behavioral problems. Conversely, youth in Onamia more frequently reported self-harming behaviors, suicide attempts, and mental, emotional, or behavioral problems, and less frequently reported caring adults.

<sup>4</sup> Minnesota Student Survey Data. Data unavailable for Aitkin County specific to American Indian youth due to data privacy policies. 38 Native youth completed 9<sup>th</sup> grade survey in Mille Lacs county; 31 in Pine County.

<sup>5</sup> Minnesota Student Survey Data. Data unavailable at the school district level specific to American Indian youth due to data privacy policies.