



## SUNY COVID SNAPSHOTS

### MODULE CONTENT

Module 2

### Suicide and Substance Misuse among Urban Native Youth During COVID-19

Statistics of substance use*	Statistics of suicide- Age 18-25	Statistics of both suicide and substance use- Age 18+
2018 AUD- age 12-17- 1.3% 2018 AUD- age 18-25- 10.3% 2018 Alcohol Initiates- age 12-17- 5.5% (Overall pop- 9.6%) 2018 Illicit Drug Use- age 12+- Marijuana most used 23% (overall pop- 15.9%)	2018 Thoughts- 15.1% (overall pop- 11%) 2018 Plan- 6.7% (overall pop- 3.4%) 2018 Attempted- 5.4% (overall 1.9%)	2018 Plan- 5.1% (no sub 1.3%) 2018 Attempted- 4.5% (no sub 0.6%)
Risk Factors	Protective Factors	
Interpersonal violence (IPV)/ Domestic violence Substance misuse Poverty Healthcare access Lack of self-identity	Cultural knowledge and traditional ways Cultural activities Strong support systems Connections to Elders and Tribal leaders Education	

### COVID Trends - Age 18+ (1497 respondents specific to coping with COVID associated stress)

<b>2020 Started or Increased Sub Use</b>	Other race- 11% (overall 13%) Unpaid caregivers for adults- 32.9% vs. 6.3% Rural (11.5%) vs. Urban (13.5%)
<b>2020 Serious Suicidal Ideations</b>	Age 18-24- 25.5% Other race- 9.8% (overall 10.7) Unpaid caregivers for adults- 30.7% vs. 3.6% Essential workers- 21.7% Rural (10.2%) vs. Urban (10.7%)

\*Up from 4.3% in 2018



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### The Biopsychosocial Effects of Chronic Stress Due to the Pandemic

Stress is a normal physical and emotional reaction to changes in life. HOWEVER, long-term, or chronic stress can lead to a range of health issues.

**Negative Health Outcomes:**

- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Menstrual problems
- Can exacerbate existing health issues

**Sources of Stress:**

Distress and alienation from cultural traditions, in turn, may lead to or be associated with depression, learning problems, conduct disorders, substance use, running away, and suicide attempts heightened risk for chronic distress because of poverty, oppression, and violence, historical trauma, discrimination, loss of language, loss of cultural traditions, stressful life events, economic hardships.

**Signs of stress:**

Negative changes in behavior: moodiness, irritability, worry, excessive hostility, abandoning long term friendships or activities, physical symptoms – “feeling sick,” depression, substance abuse, commercial tobacco use, suicide risk, risky sexual behaviors, school dropout

**Biopsychosocial:**

<https://www.hgi.org.uk/news/latest-news/alarming-hijacking-biopsychosocial-model>





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**How is stress intensified due to COVID-19:**

- Isolation, loss of connection, virtual learning (learning needs may not be met), lessened ability to participate in cultural activities, loss of jobs, stress due to virus, stress due to family, loss of family (grief)
- Interventions/coping strategies/solutions for Native youth
- Art therapy – painting, beading
- Strengthening cultural identity through traditional activities and spiritual practices
- Involvement in social activities, such as sports or clubs
- Check-ins – text, email, messenger
- Gratitude journal: <https://positivepsychology.com/strengths-based-interventions/>

Mental Health, Substance Use, and Suicidal Ideation During the COVID-19 Pandemic — United States, June 24–30, 2020 | MMWR (cdc.gov)

**Tele-Behavioural Health Definition**

- Ability to access behavioural health services at a distance through an electronic device with video conferencing
- Ability to access mental and substance use health care distantly through an electronic device

Benefits	Convenience and confidentiality	Challenges
Stay connected during COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediate access - “No waiting rooms”</li> <li>• Connect through your cell phone or other electronic device</li> <li>• Find someone to talk to that fits your specific needs</li> <li>• No longer limited to the behavioural health provider within driving distance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technology access (equipment, internet, software)/Digital divide</li> <li>• Tech comfort and knowledge (understanding/software/installation)</li> <li>• How to locate a behavioural health provider</li> <li>• Lack of connection</li> </ul>

**Why is it helpful?**

- Find someone to talk to that fits your specific needs
- Get help navigating new resources and ways of supports
- Talk to someone about your concerns or about the loss of loved one, experiencing grief dealing with lockdown (term) and supports, anxiety due to COVID-19, recovering from COVID-19, or other experiences impacting wellness during COVID-19