



# BUILDING PROTECTIVE FACTORS & RESILIENCE FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

**Suicide prevention is not limited to one month or season, it is a commitment we can carry throughout the year.** While it's important to recognize the warning signs of suicide, it is equally important to strengthen what protects us: our resilience, our relationships, and our cultural teachings.

## WHAT ARE PROTECTIVE FACTORS?

Protective factors are the supports and strengths that help us face life's challenges. For Indigenous communities, this often includes strong kinship ties, ceremonies, connection to the land, language, and the guidance of Elders. These protective factors reduce the risk of suicide and strengthen our ability to recover from difficult times.






## WHY PROTECTIVE FACTORS ARE IMPORTANT

Protective factors also promote overall wellness. When Relatives feel connected, supported, and grounded in culture, they are more likely to make healthy choices around food, movement, and stress. For example, gathering for ceremonies, preparing traditional foods, or practicing seasonal activities like ricing and fishing not only strengthen cultural identity but also support heart health, reduce chronic disease risks, and improve emotional balance.

## WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

**Resilience** is our ability to adapt, heal, and grow through struggles. It does not mean we never face hardship—it means we carry the strength to move forward with hope. Across Native communities, resilience is deeply rooted in culture, language, spirituality, and the teachings of our ancestors. These traditions remind us how to live in balance, care for one another, and walk with purpose, even in times of difficulty.

## HOW TO BUILD PROTECTIVE FACTORS:

-  **Staying Connected:** Reach out to loved ones regularly.
-  **Practicing Balance:** Care for your mind, body, spirit, and emotions.
-  **Honoring Culture:** Engage in traditions, language, and ceremonies that strengthen identity.
-  **Seeking Support:** Talking with a counselor, Elder, or trusted friend can help lighten the load.
-  **Fostering Hope:** Remember that healing is possible, and no one has to walk alone.

*For Relatives living in Nebraska:*



## ALL NATIONS CRISIS TEXTLINE

Text "Support" to 33464 to chat with an All Nations team member.

We are here seven days a week from 8:00am-Midnight.

**Sources:**  
<https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/risk-factors/>  
<https://sprc.org/risk-and-protective-factors>

Created by Morningstar  
Counseling and Consultation 09/15/25

society of care 

