



## **Update to the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority**

August 2020

# Trustee Updates

- Youth Behavioral Health Concerns During COVID-19
- Statutory Advisory Comments on the FY22/23 Proposed Budget
- Upcoming Meetings, Events and Activities

# Youth Behavioral Health Concerns During COVID-19

Alaskans are feeling anxious, depressed and stressed as coronavirus unfolds. Alaskans know how to weather a storm by being prepared and asking for help when needed.

Call your doctor or local healthcare provider if you need medical attention, or if stress and anxiety are interfering with your daily activities for several days in a row.

Call and stay connected with your family, friends, and others in your community, especially elders and those with pre-existing mental health concerns.

Take care of yourself and each other, stay calm and know when and how to seek help.

We will weather this storm together.

## **ALASKANS LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER.**

If you feel anxious, depressed, or need information about mental health resources, call the Alaska Careline at 1-877-266-HELP (4357).



# Concerns Prior to COVID-19

## Alaska Youth Risk Behavioral Health Survey (YRBS) 2019 Results

### Traditional High School Students (1,875 Youth Surveys)

- 38.1% had felt sad or hopeless for two weeks or longer in the past year.
- 25.3% seriously considered suicide.
- 19.7% had attempted suicide.
- 21.6 % used marijuana in the past 30 days.
- 3.6% had at some point used methamphetamines.
- 11.6% had experienced homelessness.

### Non-Traditional High School Students (646 Youth Surveys)

- 60.1% had felt sad or hopeless for two weeks or longer in the past year.
- 40.4% seriously considered suicide.
- 24.3% had attempted suicide.
- 50.0% used marijuana in the past 30 days.
- 12.9 % had at some point used methamphetamines.
- 29.2% had experienced homelessness.

# IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON MENTAL HEALTH

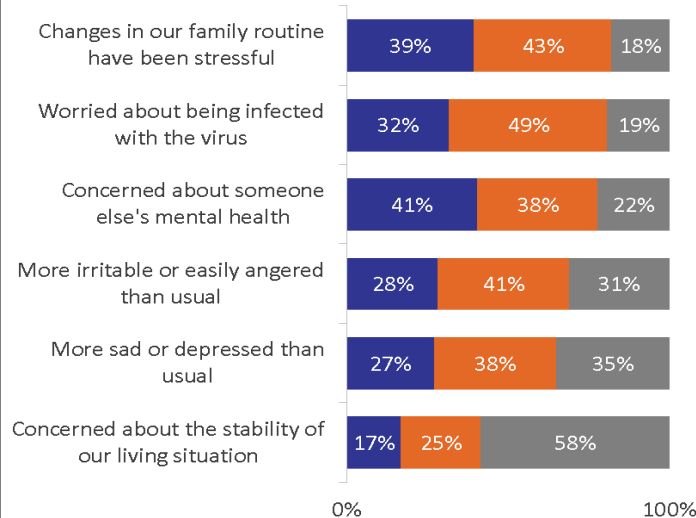
## Survey Highlights: All Respondents

Survey conducted May 13 – May 28, 2020, 818 responses

- 58% of respondents reported their mental health has gotten worse during the pandemic
- 87% of respondents are hopeful the pandemic will end soon

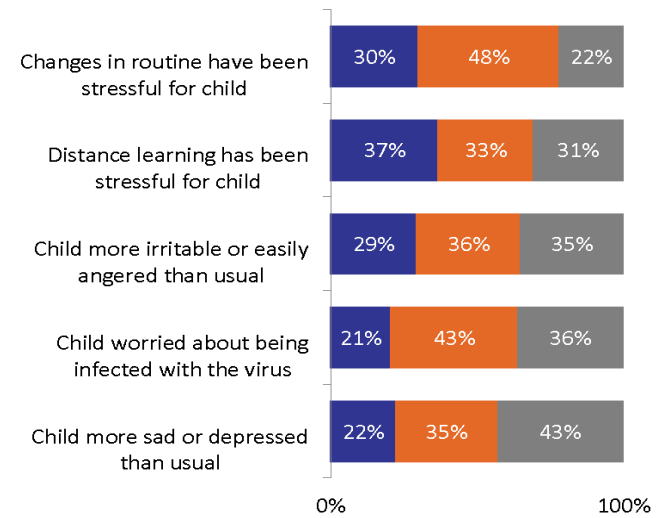
### PERSONAL MENTAL HEALTH

■ Very true ■ Somewhat true ■ Not at all true



### CHILD MENTAL HEALTH (Among 549 parent respondents)

■ Very true ■ Somewhat true ■ Not at all true/Not applicable



Data: Alaska Division of Public Health  
For more information, visit <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/wcfn/Pages/mchept>

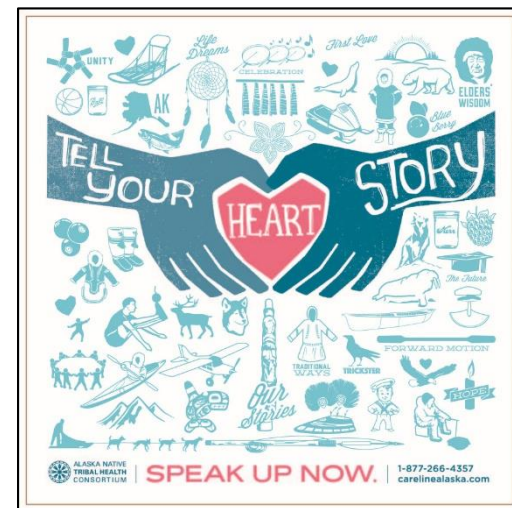
# Concerns for Youth During COVID-19

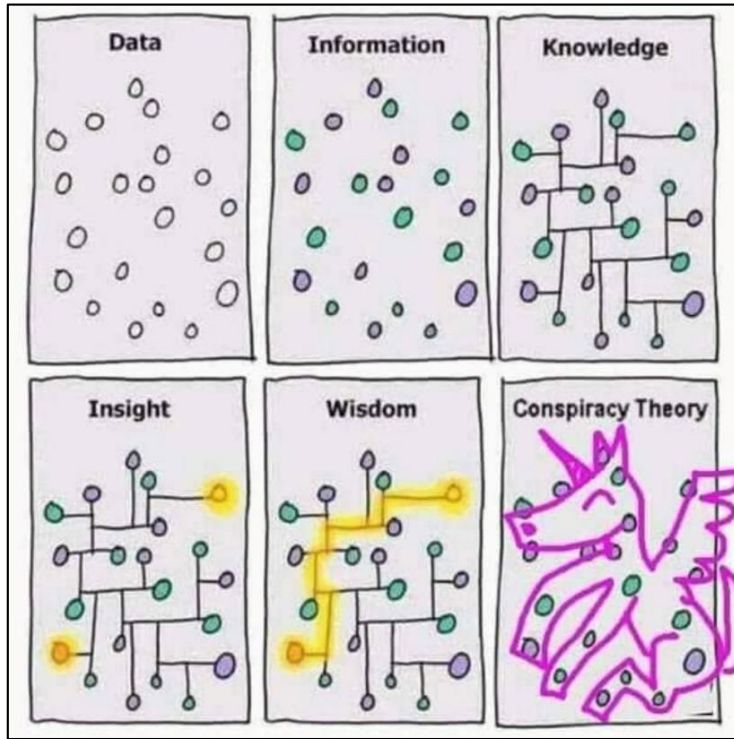


- Mental Health
  - Exacerbation of existing conditions
  - New and emerging conditions
- Substance Misuse
  - Increased consumption
  - Unknown fentanyl contamination
- Suicide
  - Depression, anxiety, and isolation
- Long-term Impacts of Collective Trauma
- Food and Housing Security

# What Can Help?

- Continued funding for early intervention and prevention programs.
- Improve mental health supports for schools.
- Recently expanded 1115 Medicaid Waiver services for youth.
- Trauma engaged schools.
- Targeted youth suicide prevention initiatives.
- Maintaining Medicaid funding, provider rates and behavioral health grants for youth services.





# Comments on FY22/23 Proposed Budget



# FY22/23 Budget Comments

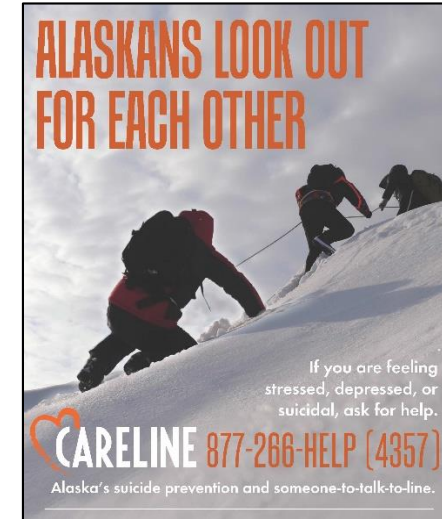
- Thank you for supporting these critically needed programs and services.
- Focus area allocations reflect the needs of Trust beneficiaries.
- Proposed expenditures in the non-focus area allocations are robust and responsive to the needs of beneficiaries and Alaska's system of care.
- We recommend prevention, early childhood interventions and behavioral health supports for youth be a top priority for Trustees.
- Fully fund the Alaska Training Cooperative in FY22/23 with MHTARR dollars.

# FY22/23 Budget Comments (Cont.)

- We recommend that positive outcomes for Trust beneficiaries, their families, and our communities be the most heavily weighed factor in Trust budget decisions.
- Statutory advisors help Trustees understand needs of Alaskans involved in the behavioral health system.
- Trust program staff are subject matter experts in their fields.
- Additional non-voting/ex-officio expertise on Trustee subcommittees continues to be a recommendation.

# Upcoming Meetings, Events and Activities

- AMHB/ABADA Board Meeting
  - Tentatively October 8 & 9<sup>th</sup> via Zoom
- Statewide Suicide Prevention Council Meeting
  - October 21<sup>st</sup> via Zoom
- Suicide Prevention Week
  - September 6-12<sup>th</sup>
- National Recovery Month
  - September 2020
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Awareness Month
  - September 2020



# Questions? Comments?

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Thank You!