

PC CARES Local Steering Committee Bulletin

August 6, 2020

Hello LSC,

The summer months bring abundance in many forms here in Alaska: Colors, sunlight, greens, birds, berries, fish, mosquitos, chores. Our “new normal” asks us to sacrifice physical togetherness to keep our communities safe and healthy, and as a result, the joy of this abundance is tinged by an ambiguous sense of loss or a feeling of being stuck. As people, we are adapting to this condition the best we can.

PC CARES is adapting alongside you. Thanks to your input, we are trying new solutions for keeping the program going from a distance. Some of these solutions are described in this newsletter, while others we will continue to need your help create, adopt, and make as useful and impactful as we can.

PC CARES Care Packages

One idea we are trying out that would allow participants and facilitators to do PC CARES from afar are these “practice kits” aimed at reminding and providing supplies for easy everyday actions shown to reduce suicide risk and help with wellness. You probably received one such package! The first focused on small, non-demanding acts of kindness.



The first round of care packages before and during assembly.



We created a short questionnaire to hear what people thought about the packages and got some positive feedback. Most people (92%) said they read the card about non-demanding acts of kindness. Half said they shared the “You Matter” messages of kindness with someone they know well, and 23% said they shared it with someone they don’t know well.

“The best part of getting this package was [it was] a big surprise. It's a really great way to connect with people, even ones you do not know, a small act of kindness can go a long way.”
- Care package recipient

The second care package will be sent in August and reminds people to have connecting conversations between youth and adults. Keep an eye out for them!

PC CARES on Facebook

Currently, the private Facebook group “PCARES At Home” has 28 members. We are hoping to grow that number closer to the 135 people across the state who have attended at least 1 learning circle. As we are delivering PC CARES from a distance, we want to create a learning community made of PC CARES facilitators and participants from across Alaska in this Facebook group.

2020 Training of Facilitators Postponed until 2021

So that we can do our PC CARES training of Trainers in person, we need to postpone for a year to ensure everyone’s safety. We are still working with our many community partners, sending PC Care Packages, and supporting other wellness work, but will need to wait. PC CARES learning circles are designed to engage people in real-time dialogue within their communities in a way that we can’t replicate in a distance-delivered format. We remain connected to folks in the Bering Strait and other PC CARES communities, and will support communities who want to finish the series of learning circles, if safe to do so. The research team (Lisa, Suzanne, Diane, Tara, Lauren, Josie, Pangaanga, Roberta, Tanya) will continue to send PC CARES packages, engage through social media, and offer online training and support to institutions like schools, and partnering with ongoing efforts as needed.

PC CARES by the Numbers: Recap of the project	
35	<i>People were trained as facilitators in the new iteration of the curriculum in October 2019</i>
14	<i>Learning circles were hosted in 7 communities before Coronavirus health mandates</i>
108	<i>People in the villages came to at least 1 learning circle this winter</i>
140	<i>Care packages were sent to 11 different communities in June, encouraging people to try non-demanding acts of kindness</i>

LSC will begin Meeting Monthly in September

Every first Thursday of the month, Tara and Lisa will host a teleconference call to cover the projects' progress and gain your input and insight as local leaders in the region. The next call will be: **Thursday, September 3rd at 11 am Alaska Time.** To join:

Call 1-669-900-6833

Meeting ID: 991 3069 6699 Passcode: 021771

And/or email Tara at pccares@umich.edu for the Zoom link.

Future calls will be on the following dates:

<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>
Sept. 3rd	January 7th
October 1st	February 4th
November 5th	March 4th
December 3rd	April 1st
	May 6th

As always, thanks for reading, and thank you for your service on our Local Steering Committee.