



Community Report for PC CARES Care Packages

October 2022

LISA WEXLER
University of Michigan
Institute for Social Research, School of Social Work
426 Thompson St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Tel: 413-545-2258
lwexler@umich.edu

With significant contributions from:

Suzanne Rataj
University of Massachusetts Amherst
srataj@umass.edu

Tara Schmidt
Institute for Social Research, University of
Michigan
pccares@umich.edu

Zinan Tao
Intern student, School of Social Work
zinant@umich.edu

Katrina McGuire
Intern student, College of Literature, Science,
and the Arts
katmcg@umich.edu

Allison Monto
Intern student, College of Literature, Science,
and the Arts
amonto@umich.edu

Tanya Kirk
Maniilaq Native Connections Coordinator
tanya.kirk@maniilaq.org

Roberta Moto
Maniilaq Wellness Manager
roberta.moto@maniilaq.org

Susan Nedza
Local Steering Committee Member
susan.nedza@skk.bssd.org

Kira Eckenweiler
Local Steering Committee Member

Josie Garnie
Local Steering Committee Member
josiegarnie@yahoo.com



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Executive Summary

Promoting Community Conversations about Research to End Suicide (PC CARES) shares scientific best practices for the prevention of suicide, and fosters communities of practice as individuals from diverse sectors of the community meet, try, and discuss self-determined steps toward suicide prevention and wellness through a series of “learning circles.” When the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted the project, “PC CARES At Home” was designed to maintain connection with community members who started with the first PC CARES cohort (N=140) and expanded to include service providers and nominated supportive adults. PC CARES at Home involves direct mailings and social media interaction to engage adults within young people’s social networks and build their capacity to support youth wellness. It does this by sending reminders and material resources to enact some of the prevention and wellness information shared during PC CARES learning circles. PC CARES Care Packages were mailed every couple of months, with invitations to join a private Facebook page for more consistent exchanges of ideas and support. Over 2 years, PC CARES sent Care Packages to 493 recipients in 49 communities in Alaska, with a total number of 1319 packages sent.

Costs

The total cost of Care Packages was around \$28,000. Excluding postage, the average cost per package was \$19.88, with the most expensive package costing \$49.66 (with a custom cut and printed deck of conversation starter cards) and the cheapest was \$10.02.

Themes

The table below summarizes the ten Care Packages that were sent as part of the PC CARES at Home initiative.

Care Package Name	Sent	Research-Based Message
Small Acts of Kindness (SAOK)	June 2020	A small act of kindness, which doesn't require anything in return, can show others you care about them and encourage them to seek help if they need it
Talk with Youth	August 2020	Youths want adults talk to them more, and believe this could effectively prevent youth suicide in their village
Listening Well	March 2021	The <i>trigger-emotion-response</i> model can guide us better understand young people's emotions. By listening without judgement, adults can improve connections with youth
Nominated Small Acts of Kindness	March 2021	A small act of kindness, which doesn't require anything in return, can show others you care about them
Restful Sleep	May 2021	Restful sleep has benefits to physical and psychological health. Spreading this information to young people will lead them to making better decisions and improved mental health
Healthy Living	August 2021	Inviting young people to engage more outdoor and physical activities can improve their physical and mental health
Reach out to Youth to Show You Care	October 2021	When we let young people know we are always there for them, and always willing to listen to them, they are more likely to seek help when they need it
Safe Homes	January 2022	Securing dangerous items (firearms, ammo, medications, alcohol) can make our home safer, and can prevent harm from impulsive decisions—even just 10 minutes can save a life.
Building Connections	May 2022	Connections with youth can be built through small conversations, outdoor activities, and understanding family history and cultural background
Finding Balance	July 2022	Four areas wellness (physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional) intertwined, and enhancing our health in one area usually has benefits in others

Evaluation

Our evaluation examines satisfaction and perceived benefits of this approach, actions taken, the feasibility of engaging recipients via Facebook, and applied learning generated by receiving the PC CARES Packages. We collected evaluation data via both surveys and interviews with Care Package recipients. Paper surveys were included in each Care Package, along with

self-addressed, stamped envelopes so recipients could easily return their surveys. Recipients were also able to complete the surveys online. Each recipient who submitted a survey was entered into a drawing to win \$50 gift card. After each Care Package, we randomly selected 5 recipients to interview. To encourage recipients to provide their authentic feedback, we offered \$20 incentives for each participant who completed an interview.

The most common comment from recipients we interviewed was how helpful the Care Packages were, and what a pleasant surprise it was to receive them. In surveys, the overall ratings from surveys were positive: (1) recipients were happy they received the packages, (2) they found the information clear and understandable, (3) they would like to take actions suggested in the packages to make positive changes for youth around them.

Care Packages provided a bridge to connect PC CARES Learning Circles participants to evidence-based wellness actions they can take during the time when people could not physically socialize. The packages also reminded participants about information from the latest Learning Circles. Packages could be used as additional review materials for participants to implement practical suicide prevention methods.

Guidance about what themes to cover and what items to include was given by members of a Local Steering Committee—a group of Elders, school administrators, service providers, and PC CARES program originators local to the regions where the packages are sent. This guidance helped shape PC CARES at Home to be as locally relevant and resonant as possible, while utilizing the combined resources of the university research grantee (University of Michigan) and local tribal health organizations (Maniilaq Association and Norton Sound Health Corporation).

History of Care Packages

Promoting Community Conversations About Research to End Suicide (PC CARES) is a community health intervention designed, supported, and implemented by the remote communities of northwestern Alaska. PC CARES builds "communities of practice" among local and regional service providers, community members, friends, and families to spark multilevel and sustained efforts for suicide prevention. In this model, monthly learning circles supported by local facilitators foster personal and collective learning about suicide prevention to spur practical, realistic action on multiple levels to prevent suicide and promote health. PC CARES was built on the shared belief that community members are experts in local culture and can find the best solutions to health problems.

Originally, PC CARES planned to train local facilitators (at an in-person training) in 5 communities per year over 3 years to host five learning circles, where family members, youth, and village providers gathered to learn about local suicide research, discuss and apply suicide prevention best practices to their local and cultural realities. The rural and remote communities where PC CARES took place are off the highway system and have no ventilators or ICU facilities, leading to increased risk during the COVID-19 pandemic. This led to required modifications to PC CARES' face-to-face approach.

Over the first months of the pandemic, we met multiple community stakeholders to understand their needs and burdens, and to develop ways to transform our approach to meet the current complex needs of communities during COVID. Conversations with our community partners and research advisors provided us the essence of a remote PC CARES model: self-determined, scientifically supported, and multilevel suicide prevention education to engage and

support local communities of practice in preventing suicide and supporting youth wellness. We adapted our original PC CARES model to a virtual format for school personnel and community health workers (both of whom have access to high-speed internet). In addition, we created the two-pronged PC CARES at Home approach, which involved sending PC CARES Packages to community members every ~8 weeks to broaden awareness and engage families with the universal prevention PC CARES educational content in their own homes, and social media engagement.

Through these distanced-delivery methods, we initiated and supported multiple levels of intervention to reduce Alaska Native youth suicide risk in rural and remote Alaskan villages, which is the original central aim of PC CARES. More specifically, we have been working with Northwest Arctic Borough School District, Bering Strait School District, and tribal organizations Maniilaq Association, Norton Sound Health Corporation, and Kawerak Inc. to extend learning to other community members through easy-to-understand information and related materials sent through the mail.

Process of Planning and Building Care Packages

We began planning for each Care Package approximately two months before we expected to send it. The creation of each Care Package involved the efforts and wisdom of people from diverse backgrounds and familiarity with the target audience: adults in the Bering Strait and Northwest Arctic regions. First, we would think about several possible themes for the Care Package based on the content of recent Learning Circles and what research evidence could be easily translatable to a Care Package. Our Local Steering Committee (LSC), who advise on the PC

CARES project, consisted of local tribal leaders, service providers, Elders, school administrators, and caring community members. In order to make sure the Care Packages were both useful and respectful to their recipients, we would ask LSC members to contribute their ideas during our monthly LSC meetings. We discussed their thoughts about the possible themes, adjusted the themes and contents include culture-friendly, research-based messages and items for recipients.

After deciding what to include in the packages, we made a draft budget, aiming to keep each Care package below \$17, including all printed materials, all items, and shipping costs. Each Care Package usually included: snacks or treats, informative magnets, activity guides, small items can be used for self-care and/or to improve connections between youth and adults. Items were usually purchased from Amazon and other bulk supply providers. Sometimes when the items we wanted to include went over the budget, Maniilaq Association helped fund the Care Packages by purchasing some of the items included in the Care Packages, which were shipped to Michigan to be assembled by university students. Using scientifically-based information, we drafted a letter and information cards for each Care Package. We also used informational magnets or activity guides to provide ideas for action and reminders about the information or resources included in the Care Package. At the end of each document, we included citations for the resources, so recipients could take a deeper look at the research if they wanted to. To keep and improve the quality of each Care Package, each package included a survey with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. The surveys usually contained 12 questions about people's reactions to and feelings about the Care packages. The questions were answered on a scale from 1 as strongly agree, 2 as agree, 3 as slightly agree, 4 as neutral, 5 as


slightly disagree, 6 as disagree and 7 as strongly disagree. The survey also asked about use of the Care Package items by recipients in “yes or no” format. The paper survey had a QR code and a shortened link for recipients to reply online rather than by mail. Additionally, we included a card where recipients could update their mailing addresses and preference for receiving future packages. In addition to surveys, we also randomly selected 5 Care Package recipients to for a 30-minute semi-structured interview to gain deeper understanding of how they used the items and information in the Care Packages.

Once the PC CARES team gave a final review of materials and approval for purchasing, we would order all needed materials (snacks, magnets, etc.) and print all needed documents (letter, informational card, survey, etc.). Once the printing materials, items and shipping materials arrived at the office in Michigan, intern students sorted and packed all of the items into individual Care Packages. The packages were sent out USPS via University of Michigan’s Campus Shipping Services. We used USPS tracking numbers to determine when the Care Packages arrived and we could begin reaching out to recipients for interviews.

To encourage package recipients to submit their feedback and suggestions, each Care Package we held a drawing for a \$50 Amazon gift card for survey respondents. After we received 20-30 surveys, we would start the survey drawing process. Phone interviewees received a \$20 Amazon gift card as thanks for their time. We have collected valuable feedback and suggestions from both interviews and surveys, and recipient feedback has led to us adapting some ideas to following Care Packages.

Care Package #1: Small Acts of Kindness (SAOK) – June 2020

When the first Care Package was sent, recipients had little contact with PC CARES over the previous few months since in-person learning circles paused during community COVID lockdowns. We used the first Care Package to remind recipients about PC CARES and its mission. In addition, the theme of the first Care Package was about sharing small, non-demanding kind gestures with people around us, to show we care about them without asking anything from them. The packages were sent to 11 Alaskan communities, to be distributed by local facilitators to the 132 people who attended one or more learning circle in their village. All recipients attended a pre-COVID in-person Learning Circle or training of facilitators. The package included 3 mini boxes of chocolates, 5 lollipops, 1 box of “You Matter” pop-out cards, 5 mint tea bags, 2 paper bags, survey with stamped envelope, information card and dried Michigan cherries to facilitators. The cost per package, excluding postage, was \$10.02. The goodies and You Matter cards could be shared immediately, so that people could immediately try showing kindness through small, non-demanding gestures.



Hello,

We want to reach out to you in this strange time to let you know that we care, and support your efforts for wellness and hope.

This PC CARES package is to remind you about how **small acts of kindness** can make a BIG difference to people receiving them. Inside are small gifts you can give to others to show you care.

The important thing to remember about small acts of kindness is that **you don't need to know someone really well to make him/her feel cared about.**

Your small act of kindness should be **non-demanding**, which means showing you care *without* asking the other person to do anything.

❌ Instead of saying, “*Call me if you want to talk,*” or “*Let me know how I can help.*”

✅ You can say, “*I want you to know I care.*” “*I am sending some sweetness to make your day better.*” “*I am thinking about you*” or “*I wanted to bring a smile to your face.*”

In studies, people who received short, kind and non-demanding notes felt supported and were more likely to seek help when they needed it.^{1,2}

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What can YOU do to support people in your family and community?

1. Notice if someone around you is having a hard time or just seems a bit down.
2. Do something or say something kind to them. It doesn't have to be big, and it shouldn't ask anything from them. You don't even have to be close to him or her.
3. We have included some supplies to help you spread kindness. Some ideas:
 - Send them a card, picture, or text message to let them know you care
 - Share a treat with him or her (We sent some for you to share.)
 - Share a positive statement with him or her (We included 'You Matter' pop-out cards!)
4. Brighten someone's day and help them feel valued. Acts of kindness and care can be good for you, too!³

Stay Connected with Us: Join the private Facebook Group **PC CARES at Home** to share your ideas and continue learning how we can uplift each other.

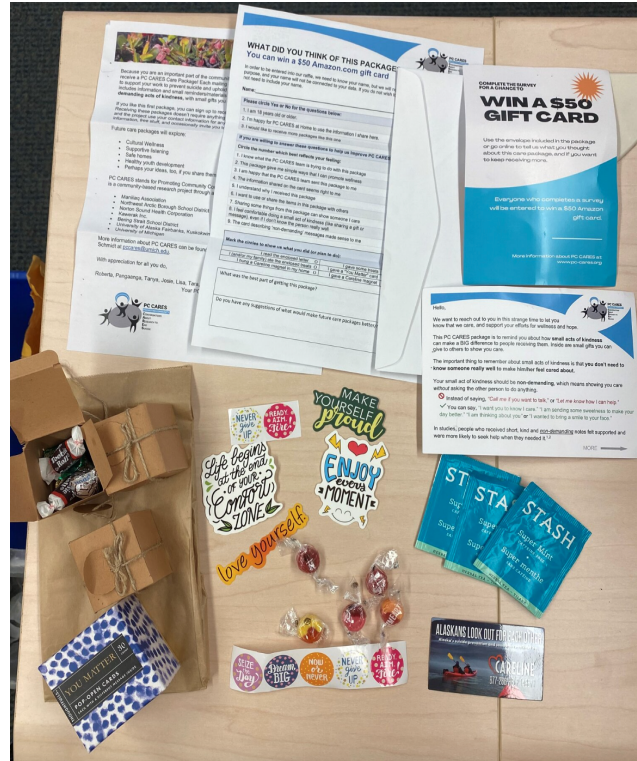
¹Motto, J. A., & Bostrom, A. G. (2001). A randomized controlled trial of postcrisis suicide prevention. *Psychiatric services*, 52(6), 828-833.

²Carter, G. L., Clover, K., Whyte, I. M., Dawson, A. H., & Este, C. D. (2005). Postcards from the EDge project: randomised controlled trial of an intervention using postcards to reduce repetition of hospital treated deliberate self poisoning. *Bmj*, 331(7520), 805.

³Post, S. G. (June 01, 2005). Altruism, happiness, and health: it's good to be good. *International Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 12, 2, 66-77.

* Small Acts of Kindness - Information card

We received 14 survey responses, and recipients reported they shared the snacks, the pop-out cards and most importantly, kindness, to people around them. Ninety-two percent (92%) of recipients read the letter, agreed with the information, and felt comfortable doing a small, non-demanding act of kindness. Recipients reported that they were happy and surprised to receive the packages, thought the contents were useful, and thought it was a good way to connect with people. For future packages, recipients suggested they would like a coffee cup, hard candy, inspirational magnets, necklaces, or other small items.



* Small Acts of Kindness - Contents

Care Package #2: Talk with Youth – August 2020

The high acceptance of Care Package #1 provided a encouraging foundation for the Care Packages to follow. In August 2020, we sent “Talk with Youth” packages to the same 132 recipients. This Care Package was a reminder of the Learning Circle that focuses on what adults can do to support youth and prevent suicide risk. The packages contained an information card about why we need to talk to youth, what youth need from adults and what adults can do to better support the youth around them. The package encouraged recipients to start conversations through which they can connect

with youth. The Talk with Youth packages included information about the power of listening – to show acceptance and patience without giving advice or opinions when youth talk about the struggles in their lives. Each package contained an Uno card game, one sewing kit, a bag of dried apple chips, one bag of popcorn, one berry bucket and conversation starter cards with questions for different ages groups, developed by the PC CARES team and custom printed. These items were chosen because they offer opportunities for adults to talk with youth while doing an activity together. The cost per package, excluding postage, was \$49.66.

We received 12 surveys for this package, and all (100%) agreed they were happy to receive the package, agreed that the information shared in the package seemed right to them,



Hi there,
This PC CARES package is a small reminder that **spending time listening to youth** can help them feel connected, cared for and supported.

Did you know that youth want more adults to talk with them?
Many adults think that young people just want to be left alone, but youth themselves say something different. *Youth actually want adults to talk to them about their lives.*

In a survey with 255 youth in Northwest Alaska, the most common ways young people said adults could prevent suicide is: “**talk to us.**”¹ Youth who have caring adults they can talk to are less likely to experience suicide (both thoughts and attempts), substance use, and violence.²⁻⁴

Adults in our region make a difference by connecting with the youth in their lives on a regular basis. In Bering Strait, about half of 182 youth surveyed said that they “talked to an adult about what is happening in their lives”. Of these, most said they talked to their parents.⁵ This also means that almost half of youth need a trusted adult to talk to. You can be that trusted adult.

You—as a parent, family member or friend—can make a difference by asking a young person about her or his life and being there to listen.⁶

You can say, “Tell me about what is going on.” Then, just hear what they have to say. *Listening well* means showing acceptance, patience, and a willingness to let the young person share what he or she is going through *without* giving advice or opinions.

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You don't have to be an expert in their problem. You don't have to think of all the “right things” to say. Just being kind and repeating back what you heard them say is enough. Most people benefit from sharing their feelings with someone who just listens, without scolding or judgement.⁶

What can YOU do to support youth in your family and community?

1. Find time to talk with a young person you care about. You can ask them to come along as you run errands, invite them to play games or help with a project (like cutting fish or picking berries), or simply take some time when you see them around. (We included some question cards you can use to help start conversations with a young person.)
2. Practice listening well: Ask questions to hear what's going on and listen to their answers.
3. To help someone feel like you are listening, repeat back what you are hearing. “Sounds like you...” Acknowledge what they are saying, and ask them what they might do.
4. If you're not sure what to say, take a breath, and just be there to listen. Your presence, time and attention show that you care, sometimes just listening is even better than words.

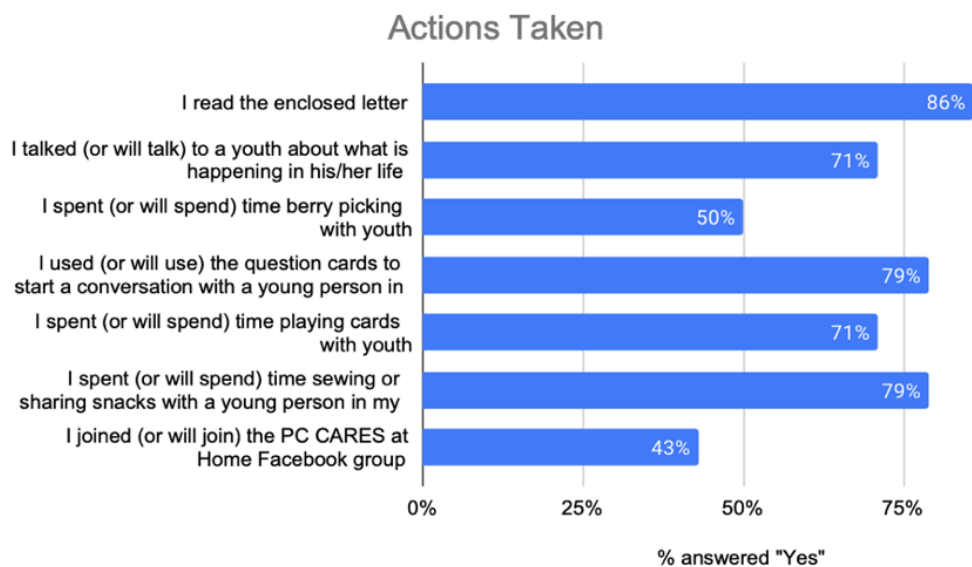
¹Wexler, L., & Goodwin, B. (2006). Youth and adult community member beliefs about Inupiat youth suicide and its prevention. *International Journal of Circumpolar Health*, 65, 5, 448-458.
²Resnick, M.D., et al. (1997). Protecting Adolescents from Harm: Findings from the National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 278 (10), 823-832.
³Rutter, M. (1985). Resilience in the face of adversity. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 147, 598-611.
⁴Sleving, R.E.; McRee, A.L.; McMorris, B.J.; Shlafer, R.J.; Gower, A.L.; Kapa, H.M.; Beckman, K.J.; Doty, J.L.; Plovman, S.L.; Resnick, M.D. Youth-Adult Connectedness: A Key Protective Factor for Adolescent Health. *Am. J. Prev. Med.* 2017, 52, S275–S278.
⁵Steps toward Prevention Survey [Research not yet published]. Anonymous questionnaire administered in the Bering Strait region in 2019. University of Michigan, University of Alaska Fairbanks. More information at www.pc-cares.org.
⁶Berger, E.; Hasking, P.; Martin, G. 'Listen to them': Adolescents' views on helping young people who self-injure. *J. Adolesc.* 2013, 36, 935–945.

* Talk to Youth – Information card

that the listening guide in the package was easy to follow, and that spending time with youth can help with wellness. Ninety-three percent (93%) of the survey participants reported they feel comfortable listening without giving advice, they want to spend more time with youth, agreed with youth want more adults to talk with them more. Seventy-one percent (71%) talked or will talk to a youth about what was happening in his/her life. According to some of the written feedback, the recipients were excited to use the sewing kit, card game and berry bucket, and the conversation starter cards were a good reminder about importance of listening to youth and how simple it can be.

	Mean Score 1=strongly agree 7=strongly disagree	n=	% who Agreed (rated 3 or lower)
I remember what PC CARES is	1.92	13	85%
This package gave me simple ways that I can promote wellness	1.36	14	100%
I am happy that the PC CARES team sent this package to me	1.00	14	100%
The information shared on the card seems right to me	1.07	14	100%
I feel comfortable listening well: not giving advise; just hearing someone	1.43	14	93%
The card describing how to listen well made sense to me	1.00	14	100%
This package made me want to spend more time talking with youth	1.50	14	93%
Youth want adults in their life to talk with them more often	1.29	14	93%
Spending time with youth can help with wellness	1.00	13	100%
I understand why I received this package	1.50	14	93%

* Talk to Youth – Survey Results



* Talk to Youth – Survey Results

We received 23 surveys back from recipients. All recipients were happy to receive the packages, wanted to use the ideas in the package to help youth around them, and agreed that the contents were helpful, and can be understood and followed easily. Ninety-three percent (93%) of the responses indicated recipients felt comfortable asking young people how they feel. Ninety-two percent (92%) of the participants read the information card. Seventy-six percent (76%) used the ideas

about triggers- emotions-responses. Seventy-two percent (72%) reported they used the Self-Care Wheel magnets. One interviewee reported the package was attentive to community needs, and the materials were clear to be understood and

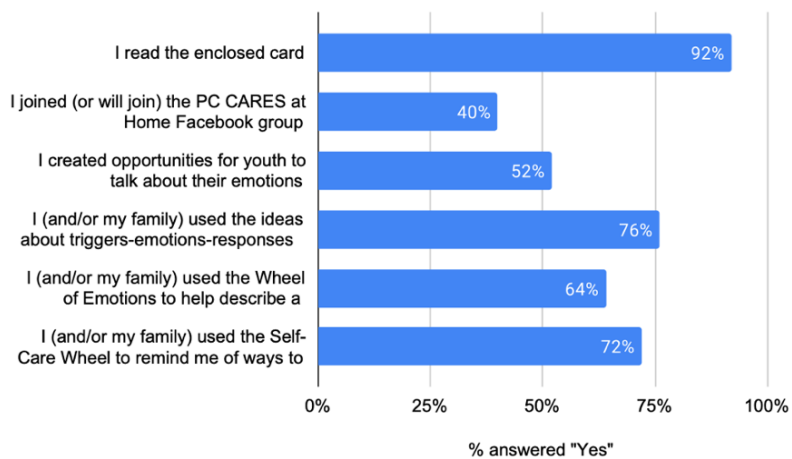
used. This interviewee felt the contents showed the communities that PC CARES really does care, which is important for suicide prevention. Another interviewee mentioned the “cheat sheet” was very helpful and helped them to

start conversations the previous day, and a 3rd interviewee stated that they put the magnet on the fridge so it can be used right away.

	Mean Score 1=strongly agree 7=strongly disagree	n=	% who Agreed (rated 3 or lower)
I know what the PC CARES team is trying to do with this package	1.21	14	100%
This package gave me simple ways that I can promote wellness	1.29	14	100%
I am happy that the PC CARES team sent this package to me	1.43	14	100%
The information about emotions on the card seems right to me	1.07	14	100%
I understand how information from this package can be helpful	1.43	14	100%
I want to use the ideas in this package with young people in my life	1.43	14	100%
Talking about emotions can be beneficial	1.21	14	100%
I feel comfortable asking young people how they are feeling	1.53	15	93%
The card describing differences between triggers-emotions-responses made sense to me	1.82	11	100%

* Listening Well – Survey Results

Actions Taken



* Listening Well – Survey Results

Care Package #4: Nominated Small Acts of Kindness – March 2021

This fourth package was intended to expand the number of recipients from those who had attended PC CARES training to supportive teachers, parents, care providers, etc. identified by Local Steering Committee Members and could attend PC CARES training in the future. The package contained the same information card as the first Care Package, with a revised letter (see picture), explaining that the recipient had been nominated as a caring adult to receive a PC CARES package and inviting them to sign up for more. It contained similar small goodies as the first SAOK package, plus additional inspirational stickers. The cost per package, excluding postage, was \$11.88.

One hundred ninety-two people were nominated and received this package. The welcome letter in this package mentioned what we will explore in future Care Packages: cultural wellness, supportive listening, safe homes, healthy youth development, and we also invited recipients to share their ideas for themes for future packages.

We received 25 surveys back from package recipients. All recipients (100%) reported they wanted to use or share the items with others, and they agreed the sharing can show someone they care. Ninety-seven percent (97%) agreed they felt comfortable doing a small act of kindness even if they were not familiar with the person, and 94% felt the “non-demanding” card made sense to them. Among the surveys, ninety-one percent (91%) of the recipients reported they read the letter, and 79% shared some treats to people around them. We also



Because you are an important part of the community's wellbeing, you've been nominated to receive a PC CARES Care Package! Each mailing includes ideas, resources, and simple tools to support your work to prevent suicide and uphold community wellness. This package includes information and small reminders/materials about the importance of **small, non-demanding acts of kindness**, with small gifts you can give to people to show you care.

If you like this first package, you can sign up to receive more by filling out the enclosed survey. Receiving these packages doesn't require anything extra from you, nor will the researchers and the project use your contact information for anything besides sending you neat information, free stuff, and occasionally invite you to give feedback to improve the program.

Future care packages will explore:

- Cultural Wellness
- Supportive listening
- Safe homes
- Healthy youth development
- Perhaps your ideas, too, if you share them!

PC CARES stands for Promoting Community Conversations about Research to End Suicide. It is a community-based research project through a partnership with the entities listed below:

- Manillaq Association
- Northwest Arctic Borough School District
- Norton Sound Health Corporation
- Kawerak Inc.
- Bering Strait School District
- University of Alaska Fairbanks, Kuskokwim Campus
- University of Michigan

More information about PC CARES can be found at www.pc-cares.org and by contacting Tara Schmidt at pccares@umich.edu.

With appreciation for all you do,

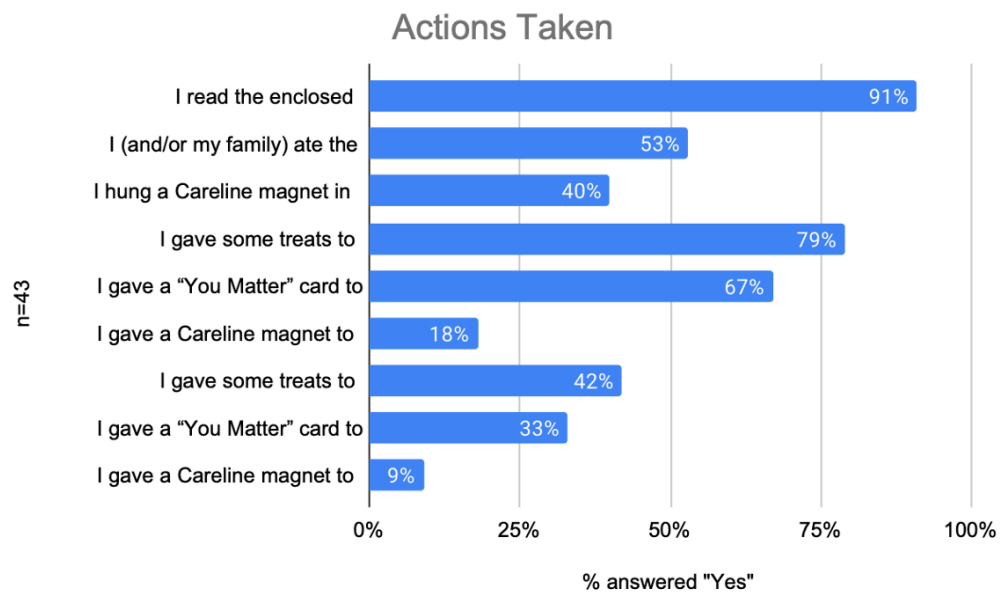
Roberta, Pangaanga, Tanya, Josie, Lisa, Tara, Lauren, Diane & Suzanne
Your PC CARES Team

* Small Acts of Kindness– Letter

received valuable comments from recipients. They expressed that small acts of kindness can go a long way and can make someone's day, even with people they don't know well. They also expressed that the information from the package provided a simple way to show you care and to promote wellness.

Table 1	Mean Score 1=strongly agree 7=strongly disagree	n=	% who Agreed (rated 3 or lower)
I know what the PC CARES team is trying to do with this package	1.70	20	85%
This package gave me simple ways that I can promote wellness	1.56	32	91%
I am happy that the PC CARES team sent this package to me	1.30	33	87%
The information shared on the card seems right to me	1.47	34	91%
I understand why I received this package	1.70	33	91%
I want to use or share the items in this package with others	1.59	19	100%
Sharing some things from this package can show someone I care	1.21	33	100%
I feel comfortable doing a small act of kindness (like sharing a gift or message), even if I don't know the person really well	1.42	33	97%
The card describing 'non-demanding' messages made sense to me	1.44	34	94%
This package gave me small gifts I want to share with others	1.57	14	93%
I would like to receive more packages like this one	1.86	14	86%
I remember what PC CARES is	1.43	14	86%

* Small Acts of Kindness – Survey Results



* Small Acts of Kindness – Survey Results

Care Package #5: Restful Sleep – May 2021

From the 2 previous Care Packages, 74 people signed up to receive more Care Packages. This package was sent to those 74 people. Through discussions with Local Steering Committee members, we chose the theme of Restful Sleep for the fifth Care Package. In the spirit of wellness and suicide prevention that can be enacted every day, we wanted to spread the benefits of good rest to recipients. Good sleep has benefits to mental health by improving mood and protecting rational decision-making. We added information and small goodies to assist recipients to support youth in their healthy sleep habits. We packed ear plugs, decaf coffee, sleepy-time tea, hand lotion and sharable snacks – all items could contribute to a better sleep environment for youth. We also included a magnet with information about how much sleep is needed at different ages. The cost per package, excluding postage, was \$10.81.

For this package, we received 22 surveys from recipients. All recipients responded they were

Hi there,

This PC CARES package is a reminder about **the importance of restful sleep.** 😊 A wise person once said, "The shortest distance between hope and despair is a good night's sleep."

Getting good sleep improves mood 😊 and helps a person stay in control of their actions¹⁻³

Good sleep makes learning, doing activities, and problem-solving more manageable.⁴⁻⁵ Sleep gives our bodies a chance to repair, replenish, and restart,⁶ and helps our brains 🧠 prepare for a new day. Young people and children especially need healthy sleep. Getting enough sleep, regularly and without interruption, is ideal.⁶ 📊 We included a magnet that shows how much sleep is needed for different ages.

What can YOU do to support youth in your family and community?

- Encourage youth to practice habits that promote healthy sleep.** These habits include:
 - During the summer, making sure kids come in when it's time to go to bed. 🌙
 - Exercising or spending time out on the land during daytime hours. 🏃🏻‍♂️ 🏹
 - Trying to go to sleep and wake up around the same time 🕒 every day.
- Switching to tea 🍵, water, or decaf coffee (avoiding pop, coffee, energy drinks) 4-6 hours before bedtime.
- Limiting screen time 2 hours before bedtime (blue light can keep us awake). 😊
- Trying to avoid smoking or chewing (no nicotine) right before bed. 🛏️
- Make sleeping spaces more restful by keeping dark and quiet (or use ear plugs).
- Keep it cool ❄️ (warm bedroom temperature makes it harder to fall asleep).
- Relax before bed with calming activities like beading, books, 🎵 music, art/crafts.⁵
- A bedtime routine can help someone settle in for a good night's sleep.⁵

References:

- ¹Ribeiro, J.D., et al. (2012). Sleep problems outperform depression and hopelessness as cross-sectional and longitudinal predictors of suicidal ideation and behavior in young adults in the military. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 136 (3), 743–50.
- ²Wojnar, M., et al. (2009). Sleep problems and suicidality in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication. *Journal of Psychiatric Research*, 43, (5), 526-531.
- ³Gangwisch, J. E., Babiss, L. A., Malaspina, D., Turner, J. B., Zammit, G. K., & Posner, K. (2010). Earlier parental set bedtimes as a protective factor against depression and suicidal ideation. *Sleep*, 33 (1), 97–106.
- ⁴Mindell, J.A., & Williamson, A.A. (2018). Earlier parental set bedtimes as a protective factor against depression and suicidal ideation. *Sleep*, 33 (1), 97–106.
- ⁵Vyazovskiy, Vladyslav V. (2015). Sleep, recovery, and metaregulation: Explaining the benefits of sleep. *Nature and Science of Sleep*, 7, 171–184. Journal Article, New Zealand: Dove Medical Press Limited.
- ⁶National Institute of Health (2021). Good sleep for good health. *News in Health*. Retrieved from: <https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2021/04/good-sleep-good-health>

More Resources:

- www.pc-cares.org
- Maniqaq Association. WE NEED YOU: resources to navigate suicide prevention, recovery, and community healing. Retrieved from: <https://www.maniqaq.org/suicide-prevention/>
- Alaska's Careline: 1-877-266-4357 or www.carelinealaska.com
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Sleep hygiene. Retrieved from: https://www.cdc.gov/sleep/about-sleep/sleep_hygiene.html

* Restful Sleep – Information card



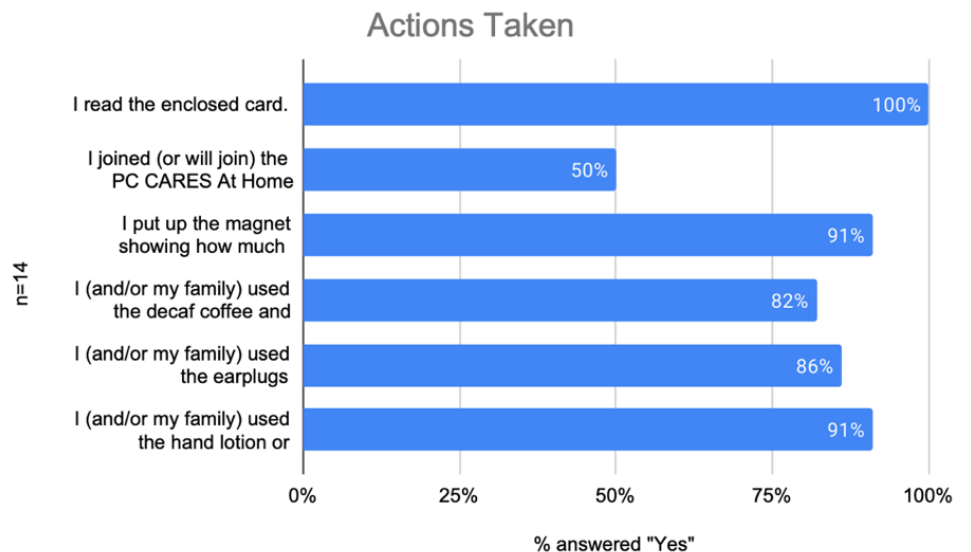
* Restful Sleep – Magnet

completely happy to receive the package, felt that the information card made sense, and agreed that getting enough restful sleep promotes well-being. Ninety-five percent (95%) agreed they felt comfortable making small changes to help young people get enough sleep. All surveys showed that participants read the information card, 91% put up the magnet and used/shared the hand lotion, 86% used the earplugs, and 82% used the decaf coffee and sleepy-time tea. Specific suggestions for future Care Packages included shareable information on Suicide Prevention, tips of self-care when someone is in mental crisis.

Additionally, interviewees mentioned their preferences in ear plugs, sleepy-time tea and they appreciated the hand lotion as the sunlight increases. Interviewees also suggested outdoor activities like playing basketball during springtime for future Care Packages, and commented that they would like to invite other participants to join PC CARES and Care Package program.

Table 1	Mean Score 1=strongly agree 7=strongly disagree	n=	% who Agreed (rated 3 or lower)
I know what the PC CARES team is trying to do with this package	1.41	22	95%
This package gave me simple ways that I can promote wellness	1.36	22	100%
I am happy that the PC CARES team sent this package to me	1.05	22	100%
The information about the importance of sleep seems right to me	1.36	22	100%
I understand how information from this package can be helpful	1.36	22	100%
I want to use the ideas from this package with young people in my life	1.18	22	100%
Getting enough restful sleep promotes well-being.	1.09	22	100%
I feel comfortable making small changes to help young people get enough sleep.	1.36	22	95%
The card describing healthy sleep habits made sense to me	1.09	22	100%

* Restful Sleep – Survey Results




* Restful Sleep – Survey Results

Care Package #6: Healthy Living – August 2021

Our sixth Care Package was about Healthy Living – it is always a good time to help youth to live healthy lives through regular exercise. The packages were sent to 75 recipients. Information in the sixth package suggested ways for recipients and young people to get moving and listed several benefits brought by exercise, such as better sleep quality, better endurance, faster recovery, stress relief, improved mood, increased mental alertness, increased energy and stamina, and better overall physical health.

Also, the back of the information card provided several ideas about how to start an exercise routine as well as suggested time for physical activities. Information from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) was adapted to include specific activities for people in different age groups. Similar to previous packages, we added healthy snacks like to-go almonds, electrolytes, fruit crisps, mint tea bags. We also included healthy-living promoting items – handball, wellness tracker, berry-picking bucket, bug repellent lotion, fishing lure and a deck of cards to encourage recipients to engage in healthy-living conversations and outdoor activities with youth around them.



Hi there,

This PC CARES package is a reminder about **the importance of exercise**.

"Take care of your body. It's the only place you have to live." - Rohn, J.

Regular exercise is beneficial for young people!

Being active for children and teens is really important, and can bring many benefits that last into adulthood. Regular exercise can result in:

1. Improved quality of sleep 🛌 (and there are so many 'perks' from good sleep!)
2. Better endurance, easier to handle difficult activities and a faster recovery 🏃
3. Stress relief, better able to handle life's challenges 🧘
4. Improvement in mood, more time spent in control of our emotions 😊
5. Increased energy and stamina, better able to do the things we love for longer! ❤️
6. Increased mental alertness 🧠
7. Better health: Reduced cholesterol and improved heart health 🏃🏠

What types of exercise do the youth in your life enjoy? Here's a few ideas to get started...

Work out	Get moving	Strengthen muscles	Strengthen bones
Playing basketball Running Dancing Swimming	Walking Biking Gathering greens Hunting eggs	Push ups Hiking uphill Yoga	Hauling fish and nets Lifting weights

How much physical activity do youth and young adults need?

- According to the CDC, **6-17 year olds should get 60+ minutes of exercise each day** and try activities that strengthen muscles and bones.
- **Young adults and adults ages 18+ should get at least 20 minutes of exercise each day**
- At least two of those days per week should focus on strengthening muscles

References:

- ¹ Tala, A. (2018). *Exercise Benefits Children Physically and Mentally*. <https://www.healthline.com/health-news/exercise-benefits-children-physically-and-mentally#What-exercises-does>
- ² Sharma, A.; Madaan, V.; Perri, F. (2006). *Exercise for Mental Health*. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1470658/>
- ³ www.pc-cares.org
- ⁴ Manilag Association. WE NEED YOU: resources to navigate suicide prevention, recovery, and community healing. Retrieved from: <https://www.manilag.org/suicide-prevention/>
- ⁵ Alaska's Careline: 1-877-266-4357 or www.carelinealaska.com
- ⁶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Physical Activity. Retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/index.html>

* Healthy Living – Information card

We received 18 surveys back in total. All feedback showed recipients had more ways to promote wellness after receiving this Care Package, and that information about benefits of physical activity for youth seemed right to them. Recipients agreed that they could understand the health information provided, the information was helpful, and agreed that a lot of thought and care went into the material for this package. Respondents agreed that they could make small changes to help young people in their life to get enough exercise.



* Healthy Living - Contents

Ninety-five percent (95%) of the respondents agreed that the package made a good case for youth to get 60 or more minutes of physical activity per day, and 78% thought getting enough exercise can prevent suicide. All recipients reported that they put up or shared the CDC exercise recommendation magnet, 95% said they read the information card, used the fruit crisps/nuts/electrolyte/berry-picking bucket/bug repellent lotion, 83% responded they or their family used handball, wellness tracker, and 56% joined “PC CARES at Home” Facebook group. Specific suggestions for future Care Packages from the care package survey was information on what each Alaskan culture does to promote healthy living. Overall, the tidbits of useful information included in this package were appreciated.

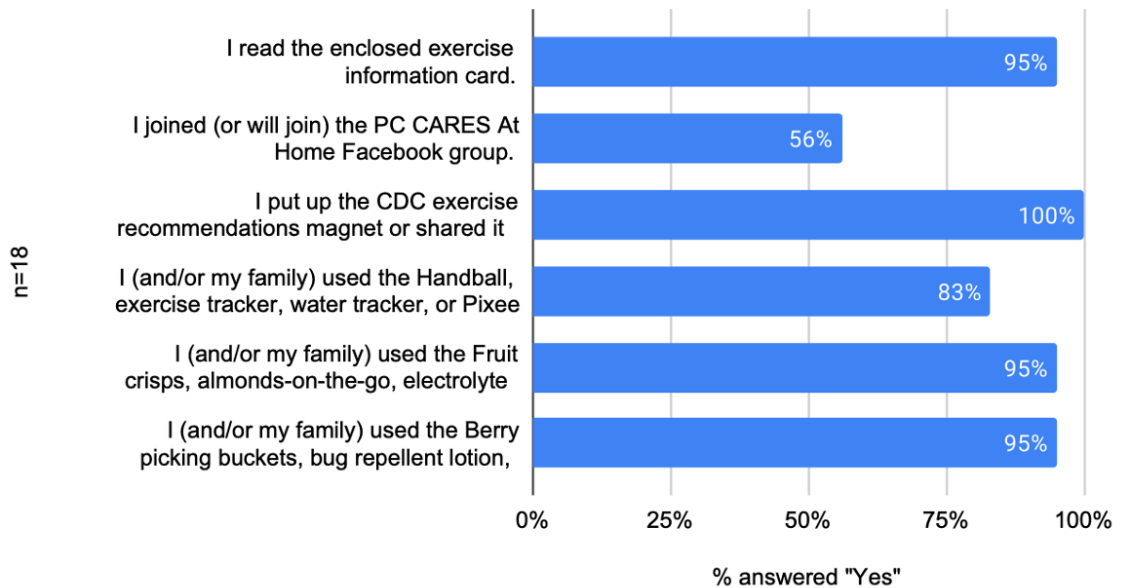
We interviewed 5 people who received this Care Package. Interviewees said they were happy to receive the packages as always, and they agreed that everything made sense in the package. One interviewee thought the wellness tracker was a good tool, and other small

shareable items were accompanied to the theme of Healthy Living. Several interviewees reported they used the berry picking bucket with their family and went to pick berries together, and one person said that decaf coffee was better than regular coffee for stressful and anxious days.

Table 1	Mean Score 1=strongly agree 7=strongly disagree	n=	% who Agreed (rated 3 or lower)
This package made a good case for youth to get 60 or more minutes of physical activity per day.	1.39	18	95%
I have more ways to promote wellness after receiving this PC CARES package.	1.39	18	100%
I am happy that the PC CARES team sent this package to me.	1.11	18	100%
The information about the benefits of physical activity for youth seems right to me.	1.11	18	100%
I understand how health information from this package can be helpful.	1.06	18	100%
I can imagine myself actually using what I learned from this package.	1.22	18	100%
Getting enough exercise can prevent suicide.	1.83	18	78%
I can make small changes to help the young people in my life get enough exercise.	1.67	18	100%
The information shared in this package made sense to me.	1.11	18	100%
A lot of thought and care went into the material for this package.	1.59	17	100%

* Healthy Living – Survey Results

Actions Taken




* Healthy Living – Survey Results

Care Package #7: Reach out to Youth to Show You Care – October 2021

In addition to the 75 people who received Care Package #6, 95 people who attended virtual PC CARES in 2021 were also added to the Care Package recipient list, for a total of 170 packages shipped for Care Package #7. The main message of this care package was to help youth by letting them know we are there for them and offer encouragement if they need it. The information card included examples of ways to show “non-demanding” care to others. We included stickers with positive quotes, sharable fruit snacks attached to thoughtful quotes, a pop-open cards with affirmative quotes, a fidget spinner pop toy to keep hands busy and calm the mind. The total cost for this package, excluding postage, was \$17.86. We hoped these items could be shared with youth for showing them that the adults in their lives care about them.

We received 29 surveys from recipients, and all (100%) responses showed recipients were happy to receive the package, and they could see how suggestions were helpful in reaching out to youth. All (100%) agreed they could imagine themselves actually reaching out to young people a little differently. All agreed that non-demanding support can make positive differences to youth, and that they could do small things to support youths around them.



Hi there 🌟

This PC CARES care package is a reminder about...
reaching out to youth to show you care!

Adults who do small things to show they care can make a BIG difference to young people💕

In research studies, people who received short, kind and non-demanding notes felt supported and were more likely to seek help when they needed it.^{1,2} 📖

When you reach out, your message should be *non-demanding*, meaning you don't ask them to *do* anything. Just *show your care* with a kind word or action.

Instead of saying:	Try instead (non-demanding):
“Call me if you need anything.”	“You are special to me.”
“What can I do to help?”	“I’ll be by your side because I care about you.”
“What do you want to talk about?”	“I am really glad to see you, [youth’s name]”
“Let me know what I can do to help.”	Just showing up (you don’t always have to say anything).

What can you do to let young people in your life know you care?
If you notice a young person around you is having a hard time or just seems a bit down.

- Do something to let them know you care or say something kind to them. It doesn't have to be big, and it should be non-demanding.

For example: *“I thought of you today and wanted to give you this. (give them a small treat/message card from the care package).”*

Here’s a few small other ideas of things you can do to show young people in your life that you care about them:

- Send them a kind text message “I am so glad you are in my life” 📱
- Share a treat with them from the care package! 🍪

Showing someone that you care has benefits for you, too!³ 🌟

References:

¹ Motto, J. A., & Bostrom, A. G. (2001). A randomized controlled trial of post-crisis suicide prevention. *Psychiatric services*, 52(6), 828-833.

² Carter, G. L., Clover, K., Whyte, I. M., Dawson, A. H., & Este, C. D. (2005). Postcards from the EDGE project: randomized controlled trial of an intervention using postcards to reduce repetition of hospital treated deliberate self poisoning. *BMJ*, 331(7520), 805.

³ Post, S. G. (June 01, 2005). Altruism, happiness, and health: it's good to be good. *International Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 12, 2, 66-77.

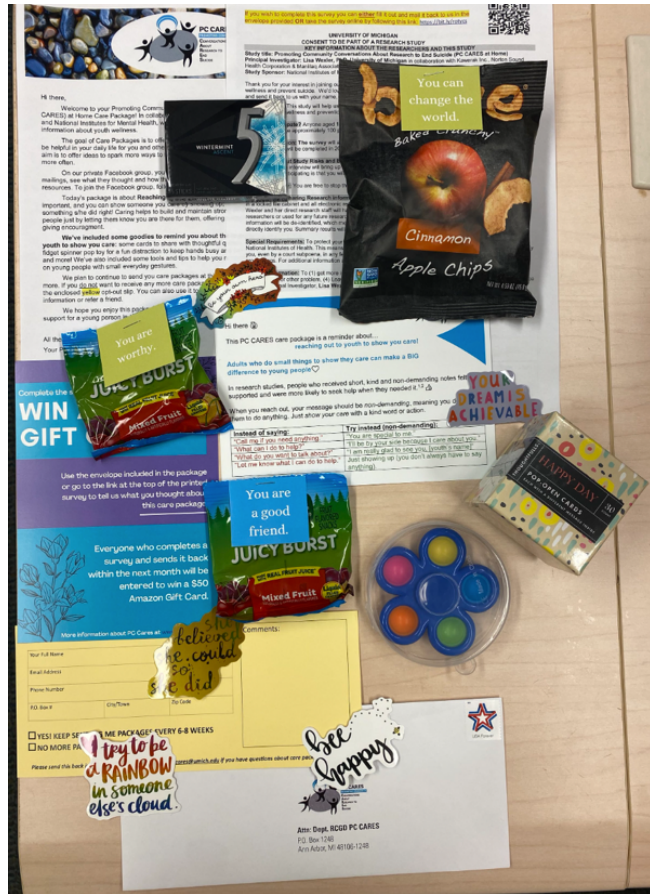
⁴ Manilaaq Association. WE NEED YOU: resources to navigate suicide prevention, recovery, and community healing. <https://www.manilaaq.org/suicide-prevention/>

⁵ Alaska's Careline: 1-877-266-4357 or www.carelinealaska.com

* Reach Out to Youth – Information card

Ninety-six percent (96%) of participants thought the information made sense to them. Actions taken by participants were varied: ninety percent read the information card, while 87% shared or used the small items and snacks in the package with family. Respondents also reported that the youth around them were happy to receive the stickers and cards, and they also reminded them how small gestures can have large emotional impact.

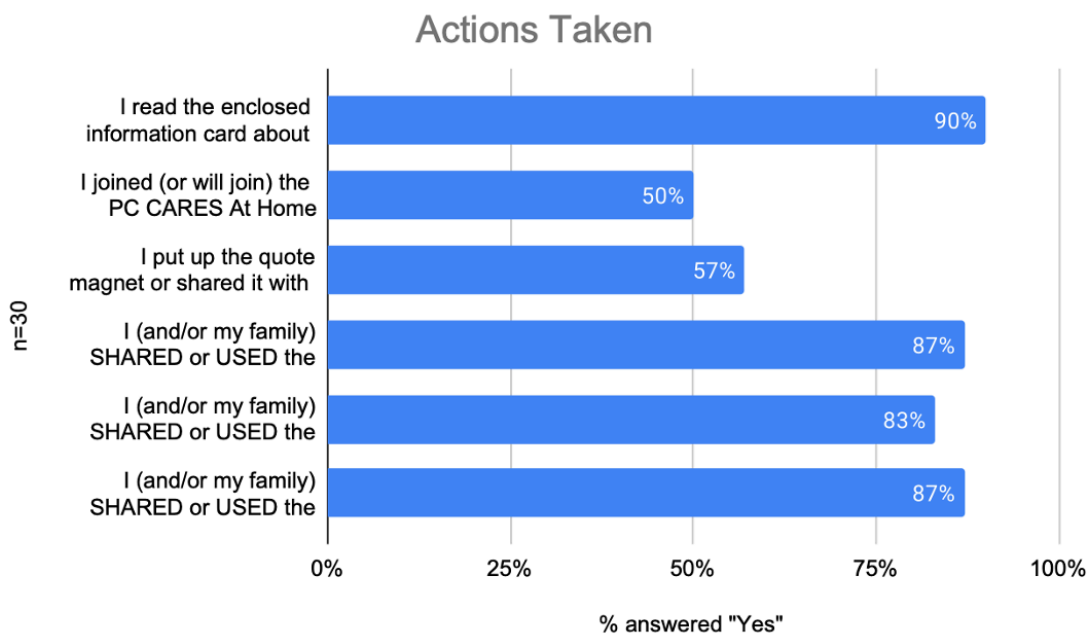
We randomly chose 5 recipients to interview for their opinions about the package. One interviewee reported they already knew most of the information in the package (because they work in a professional area), but shared the cards and gum with their sister and gave stickers to their niece. This interviewee said they would like to see items that encourage more outdoor activities with youth. Another respondent suggested future Care Packages include items related to native cultures, such as magnets with 4-5 phrases in Inupiaq, or Native coloring books. This respondent also reported that the fidget spinning toy taught the children in their family to share with each other.



* Reach Out to Youth – Contents

	Mean Score 1=strongly agree 7=strongly disagree	n=	% who Agreed (rated 3 or lower)
This package helped me see the importance of reaching out to young people.	1.55	29	89%
This PC CARES package gave me more ideas for how I can reach out to young people in my life.	1.41	29	93%
I am happy that the PC CARES team sent this package to me.	1.10	29	100%
The information about 'non-demanding' care seems right to me.	1.32	28	100%
I see how the suggestions in this package can help me reach out to youth.	1.41	29	100%
I can imagine myself actually reaching out to young people a little differently after receiving this package.	1.34	29	100%
Reaching out to young people in my life with non-demanding support can make a positive difference.	1.21	29	100%
I can do small things to support the young people in my life.	1.24	28	100%
The information shared in this package made sense to me.	1.35	29	96.5%
This care package was well done.	1.72	29	100%

* Reach out to Youth to Show You Care – Survey Results



* Reach out to Youth to Show You Care – Survey Results

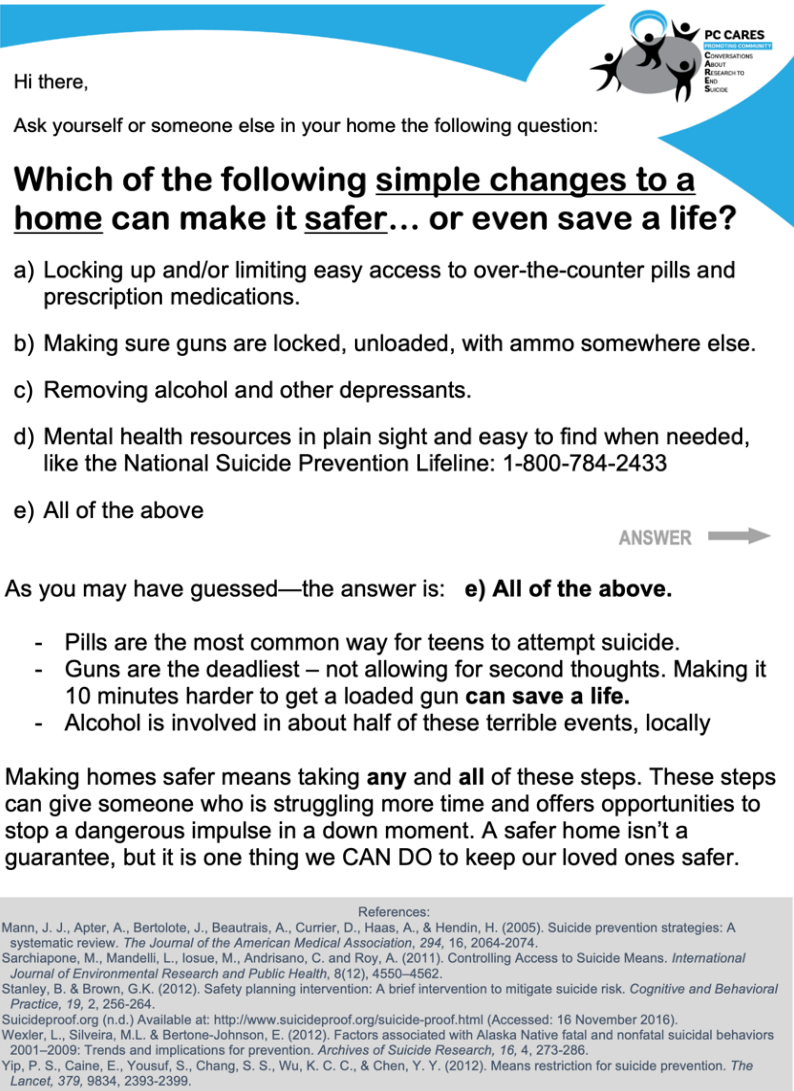
Care Package #8: Safe Homes – January 2022

For previous Care Packages, we purposely chose themes that were focused on concepts already familiar to communities, and that were not controversial, complicated, or difficult for recipients to accept. After careful discussion with the Local Steering Committee, it seemed a more direct approach to

suicide prevention would be appropriate, with the theme of “Safe Homes” dovetailing with recent virtual learning circles. The packages were sent to 201 households in Alaska. In this package, we listed steps to secure items that could be a risk to someone with a suicidal impulse or ideation. The information card included a multiple-choice question to raise people’s awareness of home safety, and listed things small things recipients can do to make their home safer.

These things include locking up medications, putting

mental health services hotline on the fridge, securing home guns and removing depressants like alcohol. We also designed region-specific magnets with Alaska mental health crisis hotlines and local resource phone numbers and websites, so people can easily seek help. We also included a poster with a house that showed which items people should be aware of, highlighting small



Hi there,

Ask yourself or someone else in your home the following question:

Which of the following simple changes to a home can make it safer... or even save a life?

- a) Locking up and/or limiting easy access to over-the-counter pills and prescription medications.
- b) Making sure guns are locked, unloaded, with ammo somewhere else.
- c) Removing alcohol and other depressants.
- d) Mental health resources in plain sight and easy to find when needed, like the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-784-2433
- e) All of the above

ANSWER →

As you may have guessed—the answer is: **e) All of the above.**

- Pills are the most common way for teens to attempt suicide.
- Guns are the deadliest – not allowing for second thoughts. Making it 10 minutes harder to get a loaded gun **can save a life.**
- Alcohol is involved in about half of these terrible events, locally

Making homes safer means taking **any** and **all** of these steps. These steps can give someone who is struggling more time and offers opportunities to stop a dangerous impulse in a down moment. A safer home isn't a guarantee, but it is one thing we **CAN DO** to keep our loved ones safer.

References:
Mann, J. J., Apter, A., Bertolote, J., Beautrais, A., Currier, D., Haas, A., & Hendin, H. (2005). Suicide prevention strategies: A systematic review. *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, 294, 16, 2064-2074.
Sarchiapone, M., Mandelli, L., Iosue, M., Andrisano, C. and Roy, A. (2011). Controlling Access to Suicide Means. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 8(12), 4550-4562.
Stanley, B. & Brown, G.K. (2012). Safety planning intervention: A brief intervention to mitigate suicide risk. *Cognitive and Behavioral Practice*, 19, 2, 256-264.
Suicideproof.org (n.d.) Available at: <http://www.suicideproof.org/suicide-proof.html> (Accessed: 16 November 2016).
Wexler, L., Silveira, M.L. & Bertone-Johnson, E. (2012). Factors associated with Alaska Native fatal and nonfatal suicidal behaviors 2001–2009: Trends and implications for prevention. *Archives of Suicide Research*, 16, 4, 273-286.
Yip, P. S., Caine, E., Yousuf, S., Chang, S. S., Wu, K. C. C., & Chen, Y. Y. (2012). Means restriction for suicide prevention. *The Lancet*, 379, 9834, 2393-2399.

* Safe Homes – Information card

changes that can make homes safer and can even save a life! We included shortbread cookies in a gift box shaped like a home, hot chocolate, and tea for the winter season. We also included a lockable medication pouch so people can keep their medications secure. The total cost per package, excluding postage, was \$19.26.



* Safe Homes – Contents

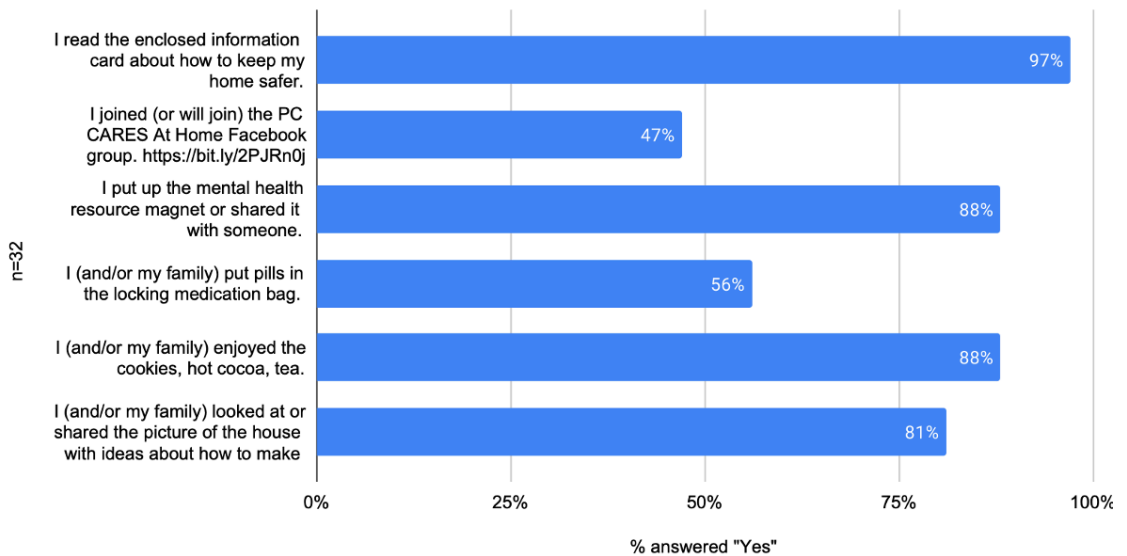
From the 201 packages sent, we received 29 surveys back from recipients. According to their feedback, 97% agreed the suggestions in the Care Package can help to make home safer, they could imagine making some of the suggested changes, and the simple changes to home can help prevent suicide when they are worried about someone. Ninety-four percent (94%) of the participants reported the package provided them more ideas of what they can do to make homes safer, and they could regularly check who has easy access to medications, guns and ammos in the house. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of respondents read the information card, 88% put up the mental health resources magnets or shared them with someone, and 81% looked at the house poster with ideas of how to make homes safer.

Due to difficulties reaching potential interview subjects in the allotted time frame, we only conducted four interviews with recipients, rather than the usual five. Interviewees liked the lockable medication pouch, but found it hard to use without instructions. Another interviewee mentioned the medication pouch was a good reminder of keeping potentially dangerous items away from children, which they felt was important. One interviewee said the

contents were not very suitable for younger children, but it was helpful to have the medication pouches, and to know that keeping items secure is important for people's safety.

Table 1	Mean Score 1=strongly agree 7=strongly disagree	n=	% who Agreed (rated 3 or lower)
This package helped me see the importance of reaching out to young people.	1.63	32	91%
This package gave me more ideas for how I can <u>homes</u> safer.	1.53	32	94%
I am happy that the PC CARES team sent this package to me.	1.38	32	97%
The information about safe homes seems right to me.	1.31	32	97%
I see how the suggestion in the package can help me make my home safer.	1.44	32	97%
I can imagine myself making some of the suggested changes (locking up pills, putting mental health numbers on my refrigerator, securing home guns).	1.38	32	97%
Making these simple changes to the home can help prevent suicide when worried about someone.	1.34	32	97%
I can regularly check to see who has easy access to medications, guns, and ammo in my house.	1.44	32	94%
The information shared in this package made sense to me.	1.47	32	97%
This care package was well done.	1.50	32	97%


Actions Taken



* Safe Homes– Survey Results

Care Package #9: Building Connections – May 2022

Building positive connections with youth provides support, guidance, and can help youth make healthy decisions. This Care Package included items to start conversations, instructions of how to properly listen to youth and activities that recipients can use to engage with youth. In the information card, we provided several simple, culturally-based topics for adults to start conversations, and ideas of activities they can do with youth. We adapted a guide for active listening to fit with the cultural context in remote Alaskan communities and included it in the package as well. Recipients could follow the tips about active listening during their conversations with youth to help build positive connections with them. In the package, we put sharable snacks (popcorn, mint tea, and fruit snacks), a box of deck of conversation prompt cards, a box of playing cards, temporary tattoos, and a magnet with the reminder: *Your impact on others is greater than you think*. The total cost per package, excluding postage, was \$26.65. We also added an instruction card with QR code that leads to a video instruction of how to set the combination for the locking medication pouches from the previous Care Package, since the Care Package interviews indicated that this was needed.



Hi there,

Did you know that caring connections between youth and adults, family members and other mentors **can improve youth's well-being and health?** These positive relationships offer support, guidance, and also help young people make healthy decisions.

You can make a **BIG** difference by finding time to talk with (or just be) with a young person you care about. You can just join them where they are 'at', or start a conversation, such as:

“What do you know about where your name came from?”

Simple questions can help build trust and support.

You showed that you care...now what? Here are some ideas:

- Spend time with young people in your life (go to the store, take a ride, go fish).
- Practice listening well: Ask questions to hear what's going on and listen to their answers.
- Talk to them about their hopes, goals, plans. Youth who are excited about their future will take more steps to be successful and healthy.
- Teach youth skills and praise them for their effort. Their confidence will grow as they try new things. Even if they might not know how: trying and failing is good practice.
- Talk about and/or model shared cultural values, like "love for children" and "knowledge of family tree."
- Spring is a great time to invite young people to do cultural activities. Building connections with land, natural environment, culture, and community is an important part of growing up.

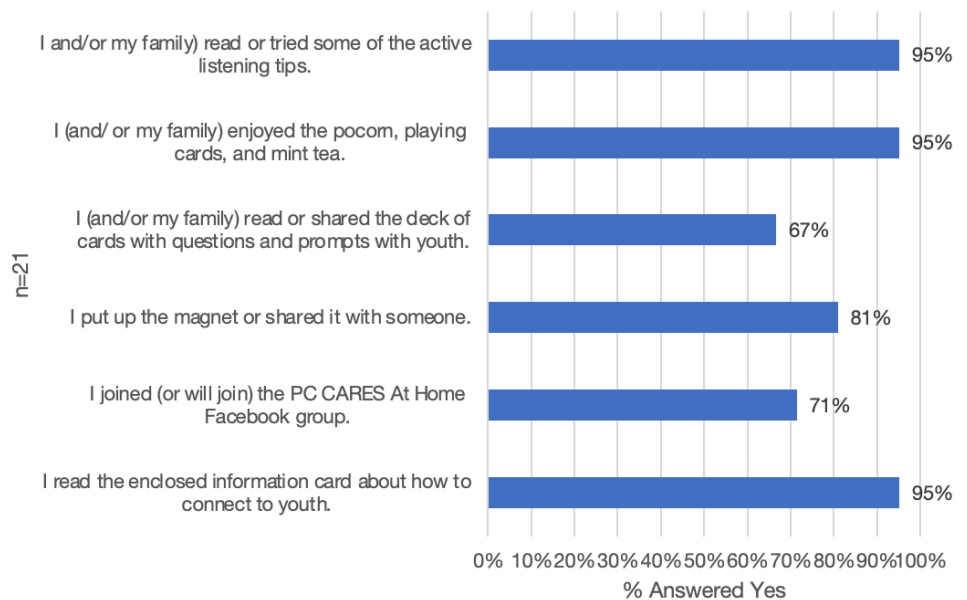
Reference:
Berger, E.; Haskino, P.; Martin, G. 'Listen to them': Adolescents' views on helping young people who self-injure. *J. Adolesc.* 2013, 36, 935-945.
Freeman, B. M. (2019). Promoting global health and well-being of Indigenous youth through the connection of land and culture-based activism. *Global Health Promotion*, 26, 17-25.
Grossman, J. B., & Bule, M. J. (2006). Review of What Youth Programs Do to Increase the Connectedness of Youth with Adults. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 39, 6, 788-799.
Kenyon, D. Y. B., & Hanson, J. D. (2012). Incorporating traditional culture into Positive Youth Development programs with American Indian/Alaska Native youth: importance of incorporating traditional American Indian/Alaska Native culture. *Child Development Perspectives*, 6, 3, 272-279.
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Sieving, R.E.; McRee, A.L.; McMorris, B.J.; Shafiq, R.J.; Gower, A.L.; Kapa, H.M.; Beckman, K.J.; Doty, J.L.; Plowman, S.L.; Resnick, M.D. Youth-Adult Connectedness: A Key Protective Factor for Adolescent Health. *Am. J. Prev. Med.* 2017, 52, S275-S278.
Sprott, J. (1999). Institutionalizing love: The *quavooing* custom among Alaskan *Inupiat*. *Arctic*, 52, 2, 152-159.
Wexler, L., & Goodwin, B. (2006). Youth and adult community member beliefs about Inupiat youth suicide and its prevention. *International Journal of Circumpolar Health*, 65, 5, 448-458.

* Building Connections – Information Card

From the 205 Care Packages sent, we received 21 surveys from recipients. According to the surveys, 95% agreed that the Care Package gave them ideas about how to support young people, and that they will take at least one of the suggested actions to connect youth with the land, cultures, and other caring adults. Ninety percent (90%) agreed that the contents and could help them better connect with youth people, and they could imagine spending time with youth and to know them better. Specific written responses mentioned people shared the contents with youth in their family, or the people around them.

Table 1	Mean Score 1=strongly agree 7=strongly disagree	n=	% who Agreed (rated 3 or lower)
This package helped me see the importance of listening to youth.	1.47	21	90%
This package gave me ideas about how to support young people in my life.	1.62	21	95%
I am happy that the PC CARES team sent this package to me.	1.38	21	95%
The information shared in this care package about building connections with young people in my life seems right to me.	1.76	21	90%
I see how the ideas in this package can help me make my connection with young people I know stronger.	1.57	21	90%
I can imagine myself making time to be with young people in my <u>life</u> so I know what is going on in their life.	1.48	21	90%
Listening to youth more often can build caring connections.	1.24	21	95%
I plan to act on at least one idea offered here to help connect youth with the land, their culture, and other caring adults.	1.33	21	95%
The information shared in this package made sense to me.	1.38	21	95%
This care package was well done.	1.38	21	95%

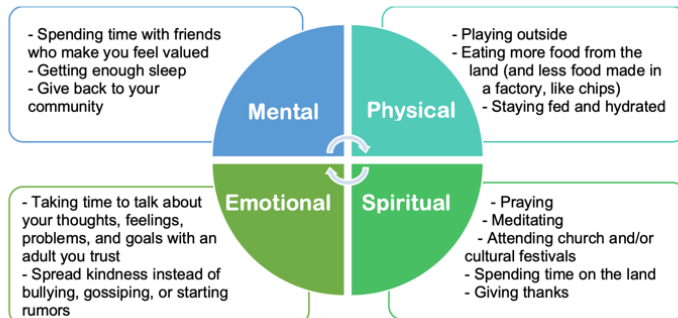
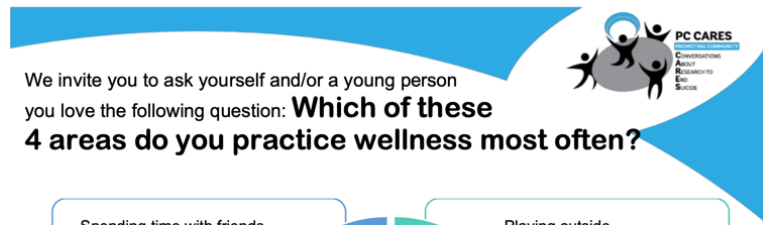
Actions Taken



* Building Connections– Survey Results

Care Package #10: Finding Balance – July 2022

With this as the final Care Package, we wanted to remind people of the importance of a balanced life, in four wellness areas – physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual—which are closely interconnected with each other. By managing each of the four wellness areas, one can increase positive outcomes in the others. We adapted the “My Native Plate” healthy eating guide from the Indian Health Service to a version more culturally-connected for Alaskan recipients. Small items in the package included: ear plugs, mixed nuts and dried berries, hygiene products, berry-picking bucket, sunscreen, and bug repellent. The items were could be used to practice improving the four areas of wellness. The total cost per package, excluding postage, was \$25.33. Similar to the Safe Homes Care Package, we divided this package into three batches depending on location – we specifically added an “Opt-in” card to recipients who live in Northwest Regions of Alaska so they could continue to receive



As you can see, these areas are interconnected.

When we do something (even something little) to increase your wellness in one area can boost other areas of wellness. You can show yourself appreciation and care by trying these steps more regularly, **creating a healthy balance** in your life.

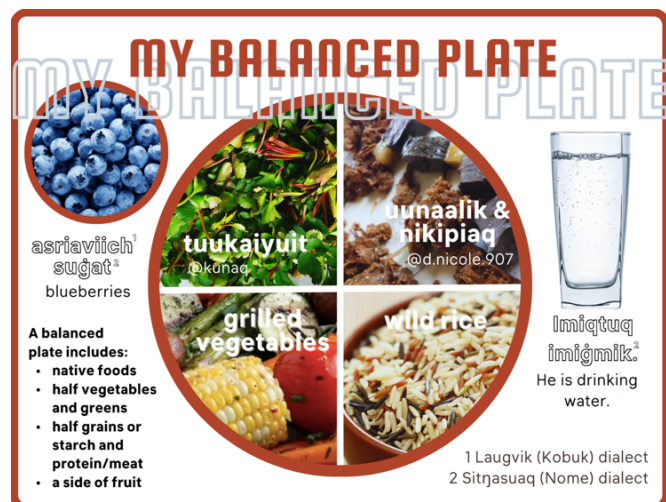
- **Spiritual wellness:** Connection to spiritual practices connects youth to other people's feelings and makes life more meaningful.¹
- **Emotional wellness:** Feeling good things like joy and gratitude more often makes it easier to take good care of ourselves physically.
- **Physical health:** Taking care of our bodies helps our mental health (for example, fish is GREAT for your brain², and healthy food can make less likely you will get sick^{3,4}).
- **Mental wellbeing:** Talking through tough topics with family members makes it easier to manage emotions⁵ and can make strong bonds. Having someone trustworthy to talk to can help us trust ourselves.

How do YOU promote healthy balance in your life? Tell us on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/pccaresathome

Reference:
¹ Brooks, F., Michaelson, V., King, N., Inchley, J., & Pickett, W. (2018). Spirituality as a protective health asset for young people: an international comparative analysis from three countries. *International Journal of Public Health*, 63, 387-395.
² Harvard School of Public Health. (2011). Fish. *The nutrition source*. <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/fish/>
³ Harvard School of Public Health. (2011). Vegetables and fruits. *The nutrition source*. <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/what-should-you-eat/vegetables-and-fruits/>
⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021). Benefits of healthy eating. <https://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/resources-publications/benefits-of-healthy-eating.html>
⁵ Stuart, J., & Jose, P. E. (2014). The protective influence of family connectedness, ethnic identity, and ethnic engagement for New Zealand Māori adolescents. *Development Psychology*, 50(6), 1817-1826.

* Finding Balance– Information Card



* Finding Balance – My Balanced Plate Magnet

sustained Care Packages from Maniilaq Association (n=65). We also included an information card with subsistence activities supported by Native Connections programming for those who live in Bering Strait Region (n=88). The third batch included recipients from anywhere else in Alaska (n=24).

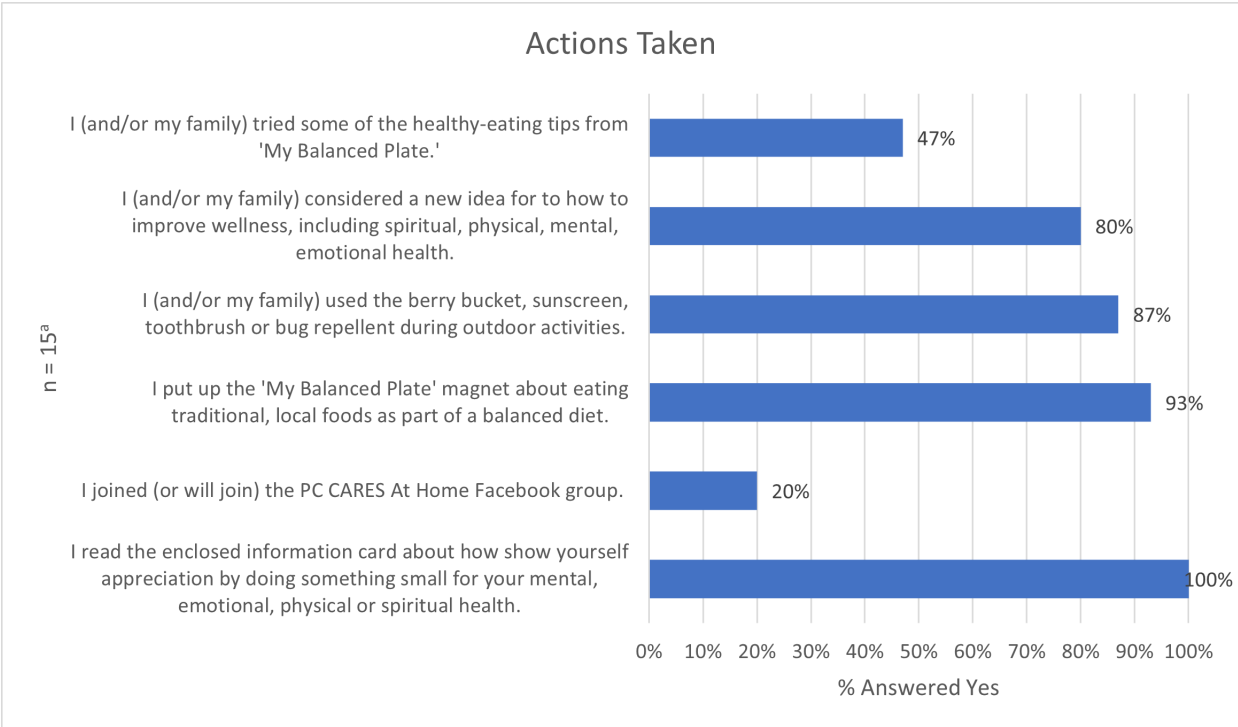
From the 177 packages sent, we received 15 surveys. The areas of highest

agreement were being happy to get the package, intention to act on the ideas offered in the package, and that going outside and experiencing traditions “can help youth gain a sense of spiritual connection.”

Of the actions taken in response to the package, 100% said they read the enclosed card, 93% said they utilized the magnet, and 87% said they did or will use the items included for outdoor activities. Only 20% said they joined or will join the Facebook group, but this lower percentage is likely due to group saturation—the care package mailing list includes 200 recipients, while the Facebook group grew to 141 members by September 2022. Care package interviews indicate that the primary reason people did not join the Facebook group is because they were not Facebook users.

Table 1	Mean Score 1=strongly agree 7=strongly disagree	n=	% who Agreed (rated 3 or lower)
This package helped me see the importance of listening to youth.	1.47	21	90%
This package gave me ideas about how to support young people in my life.	1.62	21	95%
I am happy that the PC CARES team sent this package to me.	1.38	21	95%
The information shared in this care package about building connections with young people in my life seems right to me.	1.76	21	90%
I see how the ideas in this package can help me make my connection with young people I know stronger.	1.57	21	90%
I can imagine myself making time to be with young people in my <u>life</u> so I know what is going on in their life.	1.48	21	90%
Listening to youth more often can build caring connections.	1.24	21	95%
I plan to act on at least one idea offered here to help connect youth with the land, their culture, and other caring adults.	1.33	21	95%
The information shared in this package made sense to me.	1.38	21	95%
This care package was well done.	1.38	21	95%

* Finding Healthy Balance – Survey Results



* Finding Healthy Balance – Survey Results

Eighty percent (80%) of survey respondents said they or their family considered a new idea for how to improve wellness. Specific written responses mentioned people appreciated this Care Package’s focus on wellness and encouragement.

Evaluation Results

While our response rate for surveys was relatively low, (we received 220 surveys for all care packages for a response rate of 17%), we received very positive ratings from care package recipients. Overall, they expressed that they 1) liked getting the care packages, 2) found the information in the care packages helpful, and 3) offered actions they could take. Some survey questions were repeated verbatim across surveys (like 'I happy the PC CARES team sent this package to me') while other survey questions were particular to the theme or contents of the Care Package, but shared the similar phrasing across surveys. In the tables below, we adapted questions that varied across surveys to a more generalized form in order to compare responses across surveys.

The following tables indicate survey results from all ten Care Packages. Table 1 shows the level/percentage of acceptance among people who chose strongly agree, slightly agree or agree (scale number 1-3). Table 2 shows whether survey participants had taken the actions mentioned in the survey.

Because we did not analyze collected data for Care Package 1, we missed specific statistics in Table 1 and Table 2. Instead, our data show the frequency of specific evaluations mentioned by recipients; for example, three responses mentioned the great thing of this package was sharing. Moreover, in Table 1, we did not have a lot of variance in statistics – most recipients were happy to receive the packages and willing to utilize them properly, In Care Package #6 (Healthy Living), one of the responses showed a level of 78% agreeing in the question of “getting enough exercises can prevent suicide”, perhaps because the suggested action was too tangential to a big issue like suicide prevention; recipients had different opinions on this specific question. In Care Packages 4, 8 and 9, the data was significantly lower than other data; for Care Package #4 (Second Small Acts of Kindness), it might because we received the most responses from recipients who were less familiar with PC CARES, and different and new opinions were shared and recorded. For Care Package #8 (Safe Homes), the contents were more directly related to suicide prevention, so the responses were more diverse. For Care Package #9 (Building Connections), the activities were varied and recipients might have trouble following the guides.

Table 2 is about actions taken by participants after receiving the packages, and it has more variance compared with Table 1. We have relatively higher participation rates in reading the letters and information cards, slightly lower rates of spending times in participating activities with youths and using small goodies with family members/youths. The response rates of joining PC CARES At Home Facebook group remains relatively low – in fact, more than one interviewee reported he/she does not use Facebook that often and suggested using Instagram or other popular social media platforms.

Evaluation Results:

	Number of Participants	I remember what PC CARES is/I know what PC CARES is trying to do in the package	This package gave me simple tips to practice and new ideas	I am happy that the PC CARES team sent this package to me	I see how the information in the package can help with youth/prevent suicide	I feel comfortable following the tips in the package with youth	The theme/letter made sense to me	I can imagine myself doing the activities in the package	The information card in this package made sense to me	This care package was well done	Mean
CP 1	14	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
CP 2	12	85%	100%	100%	93%	93%	100%	93%	100%	100%	96%
CP 3	14	100%	100%	100%	100%	93%	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%
CP 4	39	85%	91%	87%	100%	97%	94%	93%	91%	/	92%
CP 5	22	95%	100%	100%	100%	95%	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%
CP 6	18	100%	100%	100%	78%	91%	100%	100%	100%	100%	97%
CP 7	29	89%	93%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	97%	100%	98%
CP 8	29	91%	94%	97%	97%	97%	97%	94%	97%	97%	96%
CP 9	21	90%	95%	95%	90%	95%	95%	90%	90%	95%	93%
CP 10	15	93%	93%	100%	/	/	93%	93%	93%	93%	94%
Mean:	21.3	92%	96%	98%	95%	95%	98%	96%	96%	98%	96%


















































Table 1: satisfactory level of agreed answers (Strongly Agreed, Agreed or Slightly Agreed)

Evaluation Results (continued):

	Number of Participants	I read the letter or information card	I talked (or will talk) to youth about the information	I participated (or will participate) the recommended activities	I used (or will use) the shareable goodies in the package	I used (or will use) the activity guides in the package	I spent (or will spend) time with youth with the activities	I joined (or will join) the PC CARES at Home Facebook group	Mean
CP 1	14	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
CP 2	12	86%	71%	50%	71%	79%	79%	43%	68%
CP 3	23	92%	76%	52%	/	72%	64%	40%	66%
CP 4	39	91%	/	/	79%	40%	60%	/	68%
CP 5	22	100%	/	91%	82%	91%	86%	50%	83%
CP 6	18	95%	100%	83%	95%	100%	95%	56%	89%
CP 7	29	90%	/	83%	87%	57%	83%	50%	75%
CP 8	29	97%	/	88%	56%	88%	81%	47%	76%
CP 9	21	95%	/	67%	95%	81%	95%	71%	84%
CP 10	15	100%	/	47%	87%	80%	/	20%	67%
Mean:	22.2	94%	82%	70%	82%	76%	80%	47%	75%

Table 2: actions taken after each package

Table 3: Items included in all packages and popularity of the items		
Item	# of times included in care packages	# of times mentioned in surveys and interviews
Affirmation cards*	1	1
Age/Sleep Hours Magnet** (p. 18)	1	2
Alaska Careline Magnets	1	
Almonds	1	1
Beef jerky	1	
Berry buckets	2	7
Candy	5	1
Cardboard gift boxes filled with candy	2	1
Chapstick with PC CARES logo	1	
Conversation starter decks***	1	1
Cranberry trail mix	1	
Decaf Coffee	1	3
Deck of cards	2	3
Deck of "Dear self" reflection cards	1	4
Ear Plugs	2	
Electrolyte Packets	1	2
Face masks	1	
Fidget spinner/pop toys	1	
Fitness tracker printout	1	
Freeze dried fruit	1	2
Fruit crisps	2	
Fruit Snacks	1	1
Green Tea	1	
Gum with "truth or dare" wrappers	1	
Handball	1	2
House-shaped boxes with shortbread cookies inside	1	1
Inspirational quotes stickers	3	1
Kleenex tissues travel pack	1	
Lavender Scented Hand Lotion	1	2
Lip balm with PC CARES logo	1	
Local prevention resources magnet	1	
Lollipops	2	

Medication locking pouch	1 	3   
Microwave popcorn	3   	
Mini pretzels	1 	
Mint tea	4    	1 
My Balanced Plate magnet** (p. 31)	1 	1 
Picaridin Bug Repellent	2  	3   
Pixee spoon fishing lure	1 	2  
Self-Care Wheel magnet	1 	3   
Sport sunscreen packet	1 	
Sweet Dreams Tea	1 	2  
Hot cocoa Mix	1 	1 
Temporary tattoos	1 	
Toothbrush & toothpaste kit	1 	
Travel sewing kit	1 	2  
Uno deck (emoji design)	1 	
Wet Ones Hand and face wipes	1 	
Wheel of Emotions magnet	1 	2  
“You Matter” pop-open cards	3   	3   

**Cards were printed on cardstock and stapled to the snack packets with messages like "you are worthy" "you are a good friend" and "you can change the world"*

***Magnet was developed/designed by the PC CARES team; images of these magnets in Appendix M*

****These decks were developed by the PC CARES team with age-appropriate questions for Littles, Kids, Teens, and All ages, and created with the PC CARES logo. Full list of questions in Appendix N*

When suggesting other items for future care packages, survey respondents said they wanted more of the following:

- More items that talk about active listening
- More magnets or brochures with resources to share with families
- More interactive topic cards

Ideas for future care packages

While many items suggested by recipients and Local Steering Committee members were incorporated and included in the care packages we sent, not all the ideas were used. Some items were too costly, too labor-intensive to put together, or PC CARES staff may have lacked

the expertise to cover a topic well, or the topic was outside the scope of suicide prevention and wellness. However, these ideas were documented and are listed in this section.

Local Steering Committee suggestions. Below is a list of themes/topics the LSC suggested for care packages, with the items they imagined including in that care package listed beneath the theme/topic.

- Community: the importance of support and connection/Inupiaq values
 - Salmon berry jam
 - Sailor boy crackers
 - Sewing projects
 - Something related to prayer
 - Smoked salmon
- Anniversary of deaths— culture, food, family time helps with grief and healing
- Healthy lifestyle
 - What is healthy in your native culture and how to participate and learn
- Safety
 - Information about gun safety, ice safety, traveling safely in the country
 - LED flashlights
 - Emergency materials like fire starters
 - Flat floatation devices for boat keys
- Spending time out on the land/Spending time in nature or outside
 - How it heals us, how to be safe
 - Pedometer
 - Toiletries bags
 - Tarps
 - Trail mix
 - Camping supplies
 - Peppermint oil/tea tree oil
- Self-care
 - Self-Care cards
 - Notebook/journal and pen OR Good vibes coloring book or Positively Inspired/colored pencils
 - Loose leaf teas and honey sticks
 - with small descriptions of what they are good for, (I.e.- Chamomile for sleep and relaxation, etc...we can make little kits with tea balls so people can create tea for themselves and others)
 - Mindfulness/meditation materials
 - A refrigerator magnet with a quote about self-care (or a sticker or a small sign)
 - *"I would rather be able to appreciate things I cannot have than to have things I am not able to appreciate"* - Elbert Hubbard

- *"Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow" - Melody Beattie*
 - Lunch box/cooler bag
 - Water bottle
 - Trying new things/taking reasonable risks
 - Driving places you've never driven before
 - Meeting/making friends with new people
 - Trying to learn Inupiaq words, learning/trying new things in general
 - Paints and a tiny canvas
 - Sewing or embroidery activity, something to learn or try, a little encouragement to try something different.
 - Instructions on how to make a beaver hat, or how to bead.
 - "This month pick 1 thing you want to learn and spend time on it. Something you will enjoy."

Recipient suggestions. Recipients reported that they enjoyed that the items in the care packages could be shared with others in their community. They liked that it gave an opportunity to connect and show care for others. Surveys and care package interviews included the question, "What would make future care packages better or more useful to you?" Some recipients also had suggestions for other items that they'd like to see in future Care Packages. Their suggestions included:

- Notes from elders on the importance [of safe homes]
- Information on what each Alaskan culture does to promote healthy living
- Discussion guide for talking about suicide
- Helpful tips to respond to someone who is depressed, sexually, or physically or verbally assaulted
- Native stories that teach about connectedness with others, land, animal, earth, and spirits
- Craft kits to remind people to keep busy in the winter
- Stress gadgets and stress avoidance tips
- Family night ideas
- Cards or little pocket facts that I can give to people
- Small diary or journal
- Pillows or stuffed toys
- Word games like Bananagrams

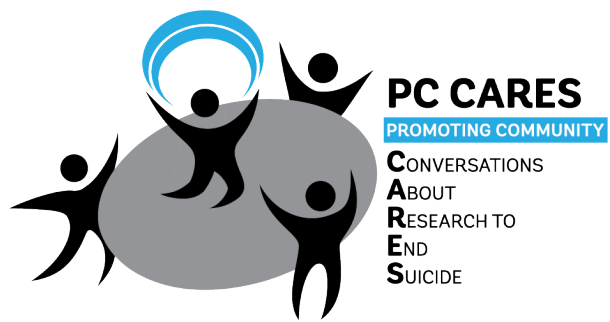
- Pen
- Drawstring backpack
- Poems, short stories
- Small joke book
- Survival booklet on how to survive in the country
- Calendar
- Plastic bracelets to give out, "slap bracelets"
- Keychains with positive quotes
- Mouse pads with infographics (like the Self-care wheel magnet)
- Dice for Yahtzee
- Eye glass cleaning kit
- Cloth face mask

Conclusion

PC CARES designed, assembled, and shipped ten themed Care Packages over two years to recipients in Northwestern Alaska who had engaged in PC CARES. With consideration for cultural adaptation, suitability, convenience and understandability, the packages included suicide prevention information, accompanied with theme-matched items and surveys to measure recipient satisfaction and use of the packages. The Care Packages helped build connections and good will between PC CARES and participants during COVID-19 pandemic, and were welcomed and well-used by recipients. As funding for PC CARES sponsored Care Packages comes to an end, Maniilaq Association has committed to sustaining Care Packages by creating and sending out Care Packages to community members in their service area of Northwest Alaska.

Funding

Funding for developing and supporting research on PC CARES was provided by the National Institute of Mental Health (R34 MH096884 and R01 MH112458) and programming support was received from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).



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