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CENTER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES  
AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

# CHALLENGES

MH, substance abuse, suicide, family violence, health risks

Traditional/historic Montana values guide behaviors that perpetuate these challenges

## TRADITIONAL MONTANA VALUES

## REINFORCED BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES

Privacy/private rights

Don't let others know you have a personal or family problem, don't ask others about their lives, don't ask for or offer help when it is obvious (death, birth, fire)

Tough – "Cowboy up"

Don't complain, make sacrifices, never show fear, never quit, tolerate pain more than others

Self-reliance

Solve problems yourself, don't rely on outsiders to solve your problems

Independence

Freedom. Limited interest in outsiders telling us how to live our lives

Humility

Don't brag or spend too much time speaking about yourself; appropriate if sharing about children/grandchildren

Family

Connection to kin is vital to understand who you are and expectations

TRADITIONAL MT VALUES	REINFORCED BELIEF/ATTITUDES	BEHAVIOR TENDENCIES/IDENTITY
Privacy/private rights	Don't let others know you have a problem, don't ask others about their lives, don't ask for or offer help until it is obvious (death, birth, fire)	Suffer in silence; Substances to numb pain; Avoid solutions that limit privacy; Suicide is an option; Don't take my guns
Tough – “Cowboy up”	Don't complain, make sacrifices, never show fear, never quit, tolerate pain more than others	Important to appear fearless and make sacrifices that may jeopardize personal safety or well-being; An easier, sacrifice-free life can threaten identity; Vulnerability is a weakness
Self-reliance	Solve problems yourself, don't rely on outsiders to solve your problems	Don't ask for help Often wait until it is too late to get help
Independence	Freedoms are important; no outsiders telling us how to live	Drinking and driving; Open container; No speed limit; No helmets
Humility	Don't brag or spend too much time speaking about yourself; appropriate if sharing about children/grandchildren	Lack of sharing about areas that are going well in our lives and seeking validation. Unimpressed with braggers with fancy degrees or titles
Family	Connection to kin is vital to understand who you are and expectations	Fear of stepping outside of the family norm causes people to not seek help

# REFRAMING VALUES - BEHAVIORS

- **Privacy** can limit opportunities for you to have positive relationships
- **Being tough** can include courageous behaviors like asking for help, learning skills to manage negative emotions, being vulnerable
- **Relying on others** can help you to better manage normal emotions that occur when feeling anxious, depressed, or grieving a loss.
- **"Outsiders"** have good ideas and our children can lead healthier lives by following their example
- **Disclosing** aspects of yourself takes courage and can result in opportunities for support
- **Take new risks** and disregard what others might think

# STRENGTHS



- ✓ Self-reliant, tough, and independent problem-solvers are all strengths that can be rechanneled into new behaviors/identities.
- ✓ The menu of socially acceptable behaviors is often sparse. Teaching new options can help identities to evolve.
- ✓ An increased willingness to use tele-health options (video, text, phone, social media) is creating new opportunities.

# QUESTIONS?

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