and Dakota/Lakota tribal affiliations (the largest groups attending Minnesota schools), one-third of students selected *other tribe* with unknown affiliation.

Since the measures and variables used in the study were based on self-reported responses to the survey items, it should be noted that respondents may tend to be more biased to the items related to negative experiences. Therefore, self-report bias may mask the real magnitude of the associations (Devaux & Sassi, 2015; Krumpal, 2013; Latkin et al., 2017).

CONCLUSION

The socio-cultural and educational contexts for AI/AN students are complex and their mental health outcomes are unacceptable, which begets the need to expand on and increase research activities in this student community. Bivariate associations and correlations are insufficient and do not uncover the whole picture. Risk factors and risky behaviors are consistently associated with mental distress across AI/AN student groups. But most importantly, not only do protective factors reduce the likelihood of mental distress, they also reduce the negative effects of risk factors and behaviors. Educators, counselors, and youth workers can use this information to structure curriculum and after school programs, learning supports, therapy practices, and developmental opportunities, to better support the needs of these students, specifically through better understanding of the events and contexts that contribute to students' elevated mental distress levels. de Heer et al. (2020), and many others (McKinley et al., 2019, Shane et al., 2018), point to the value of collaborations among researchers and practitioners; this is a good place to demonstrate that recommendation.

Social supports reduce the likelihood of mental distress among AI/AN students, particularly family/community support and sense of empowerment. In fact, in the context of such supports, the negative effects of risk factors and behaviors are reduced, particularly the negative effects of experiencing trauma. These findings can equip practitioners with the knowledge to further support AI/AN students, specifically, through a better understanding of which social supports are at play and the importance of context, such as home and school environments. The Circle of Courage, as an indigenous PYD framework, is more than a philosophy; it represents core values for education and youth work in ways that are consistent with our findings. Leveraging the assets, positive supports, and elements reflected in the Circle of Courage, practitioners and policy makers can be better equipped to promote positive mental health among AI/AN students.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interests.

AUTHOR INFORMATION

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APPENDIX

Table A1
Study Variables and Associated Items in MSS 2019

Name of variable	Items used to create the variable	Variable construction method
Mental Distress	• Do you have any long-term mental health, behavioral or emotional problems? Long-term means lasting 6 months or more. • Have you ever been treated for a mental health, emotional or behavioral problem (during the last year or more than a year ago)? • During the last 12 months, how many times did you do something to purposely hurt or injure yourself without wanting to die, such as cutting, burning or bruising yourself on purpose? * not Y/N • Have you ever seriously considered attempting suicide (during the last year or more than a year ago)? • Have you ever actually attempted suicide (during the last year or more than a year ago)? Choices: *Yes, No*	dichotomous variable 1=Yes, if *Yes* item choice is selected at least for one question; 0=No, otherwise.
Trauma	• Do you live with anyone who drinks too much alcohol? • Do you live with anyone who uses illegal drugs or abuses prescription drugs? • Does a parent or other adult in your home regularly swear at you, insult you or put you down? • Has a parent or other adult in your household ever hit, beat, kicked or physically hurt you in any way? • Have your parents or other adults in your home ever slapped, hit, kicked, punched or beat each other up? • Has any older or stronger member of your family ever touched you or had you touch them sexually? • Have any of your parents or guardians ever been in jail or prison? • During the past 12 months, have you stayed in a shelter, somewhere not intended as a place to live, or someone else's home because you had no other place to stay (on your own without any adult family members or with an adult family member)? Choices: *Yes, No*	dichotomous variable 1=Yes, if *Yes* item choice is selected at least for one question; 0=No, otherwise.

Name of variable	Items used to create the variable	Variable construction method
Being bullied (victim)	During the last 30 days, how often have other students harassed or bullied you for any of the following reasons? • Your race, ethnicity or national origin • Your religion • Your gender • Because you are gay or lesbian or because someone thought you were • A physical or mental disability • Your weight or physical appearance During the last 30 days, how often have you been bullied through e-mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, websites or texting? During the last 30 days, how often have other students at school… • pushed, shoved, slapped, hit or kicked you when they weren't kidding around? • threatened to beat you up? • spread mean rumors or lies about you? • made sexual jokes, comments or gestures towards you? • excluded you from friends, other students or activities? Choices: *never, once or twice, about once a week, several times a week, every day*	continuous variable created by partial credit Rasch model
Family/ community support	• Can you talk to your mother about problems you are having? Choices: *yes, most of the time; yes, some of the time; no, not very often; no, not at all; my mother is not around* • Your parents care about you. • Other adult relatives care about you. • Friends care about you. • Adults in your community care about you. Choices: *not at all, a little, some, quite a bit, very much*	continuous variable created by partial credit Rasch model

Name of variable	Items used to create the variable	Variable construction method
Empowerment	• I feel safe at school. • I feel safe in my neighborhood. • I feel safe at home. Choices: *strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree* • I feel valued and appreciated by others. • I am included in family tasks and decisions. • I am given useful roles and responsibilities. Choices: *not at all or rarely, somewhat or sometimes, very of often, extremely or almost always*	continuous variable created by partial credit Rasch model
Teacher/ school support	• Overall, adults at my school treat students fairly. • Adults at my school listen to the students. • The school rules are fair. • At my school, teachers care about students. • Most teachers at my school are interested in me as a person. • Teachers/other adults at school care about you. Choices: *strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree*	continuous variable created by partial credit Rasch model
OST activity participation (at least 3 times/week)	During a typical week, how often do you participate in each of the following activities outside of the regular school day • Sports teams, such as park and rec teams, school teams, in-house teams or traveling teams • School sponsored activities or clubs that are not sports, such as drama, music, chess or science club • Leadership activities such as student government, youth councils or committees • Other community clubs such as 4-H, Scouts, Y-clubs or Community Ed? • Artistic lessons, such as music or dance • Physical activity lessons, such as tennis or karate Choices: *0 days, 1 day, 2 days, 3 to 4 days, 5 or more days*	dichotomous variable 1=Yes, if student participates in any activities a total of at least three times a week; 0=No, otherwise

Table A2
Intercorrelations Among the Study Variables

	MD	age	low SES	sex	race	tribe	trauma	BD	subs. use	skip school	FCS	EM	TSS	OST activ.	diet
age	0.05	1.00													
low SES	0.20	-0.08	1.00												
sex	0.36	-0.02	0.08	1.00											
race	0.06	-0.02	-0.09	0.10	1.00										
tribe	0.01	0.04	0.19	0.06	-0.23	1.00									
trauma	0.48	0.02	0.35	0.15	-0.05	0.13	1.00								
BD	0.45	-0.11	0.08	0.20	0.06	-0.03	0.31	1.00							
subs. use	0.47	0.16	0.07	0.15	0.04	0.07	0.46	0.31	1.00						
skip school	0.16	0.04	0.14	0.10	-0.04	0.13	0.16	0.10	0.20	1.00					
FCS	-0.44	-0.02	-0.17	-0.17	-0.03	-0.05	-0.42	-0.32	-0.31	-0.12	1.00				
EM	-0.48	0.00	-0.18	-0.22	-0.02	-0.03	-0.41	-0.36	-0.32	-0.14	0.65	1.00			
TSS	-0.30	-0.01	-0.06	-0.19	-0.02	-0.07	-0.29	-0.31	-0.30	-0.18	0.54	0.51	1.00		
OST activ.	-0.19	-0.04	-0.24	0.00	0.04	-0.06	-0.20	0.06	-0.09	-0.12	0.24	0.23	0.13	1.00	
diet	-0.09	-0.02	-0.15	0.02	0.01	-0.08	-0.16	-0.01	-0.09	-0.06	0.20	0.23	0.14	0.25	1.00
sleep	-0.30	-0.16	-0.05	-0.15	-0.03	-0.04	-0.26	-0.16	-0.30	-0.18	0.34	0.35	0.27	0.12	0.16