



Training Professionals & Communities in
Suicide Prevention & Response[®]

Postvention Readiness Assessment

American Indian & Alaska Native Edition

Assessment & Decision Tree:

For Tribal Nations and Alaska Native communities to use and adapt

About This Toolkit

Postvention is the organized response a community provides after a suicide or other sudden, traumatic death — including a drug poisoning (overdose) death — with the goals of supporting those affected, reducing additional risk, and building long-term resilience. NAMI New Hampshire's Connect™ Postvention Program partners with schools, college campuses, healthcare systems, workplaces, faith communities, community coalitions, and municipalities to plan and deliver that response.

This assessment is the first step in that partnership. It is designed to work whether the loss (or anticipated loss) a community is preparing for is a suicide, a drug poisoning (overdose) death, or another sudden death — the process of building readiness is the same.

A Note on This Edition

This edition adapts the Community Edition assessment to acknowledge the governance structures and traditional practices many Tribal Nations and Alaska Native communities already bring to this work. AI/AN communities are not one culture — they are hundreds of distinct nations, each with its own history, language, and protocols.

Please treat this as a starting draft, not a finished instrument. Before using it with a specific community, review and adjust the language here — including how questions about death, loss, and grief are worded — with that community's own leadership, Elders, and Traditional Healers.

Nothing in this assessment needs to leave the community. Results belong to the people who complete them, and are shared with NAMI NH's Connect Program only if and when a community chooses to.

Who This Is For

Communities Requesting NAMI NH Support

Complete this together with a NAMI NH Connect team member as your first conversation, to identify strengths and gaps before training begins.

Conference & Workshop Participants

Take the Assessment and Decision Tree back to your own community. If your results point toward reaching out, we welcome that conversation.

What's Inside

Part 1 — Readiness Assessment. Seven sections and seventeen questions covering motivation, awareness, infrastructure, coordination, capacity, readiness for action, and strengths — plus a scoring guide.

Part 2 — Decision Tree. Translates your score, along with real-time context, into a recommended next step.

How to Use This Toolkit

1. Complete the Readiness Assessment (Part 1) as a team, whenever possible.
2. Total your score using the Scoring Guide at the end of Part 1.
3. Follow the Decision Tree (Part 2) to identify a recommended next step for your community.
4. If you'd like to talk through your results, reach out to NAMI NH — see the closing page for contact information.

Complete each section as a team whenever possible — readiness looks different depending on who is in the room. Where a scale is provided, mark the number that best reflects your current reality, not your hopes for the future.

PART 1

Readiness Assessment

Seven sections · seventeen questions · a simple scoring guide

SECTION 1 Motivation & Current Need

WHAT READINESS LOOKS LIKE

A ready community can name what is driving its interest — a recent loss, a situation that almost resulted in a loss, or simply a desire to prepare before a crisis occurs — and shares a clear, honest sense of urgency. If a recent suicide or other sudden death has occurred, it has already received at least an initial, informal response, so this conversation is not the community's very first step.

1. What is prompting your interest in postvention support? (Select all that apply.)

- ☐ A recent suicide or other sudden death (e.g., a drug poisoning (overdose) death)
- ☐ Proactive planning before a crisis occurs
- ☐ Staff or community concern
- ☐ Ongoing impact of historical or intergenerational trauma

Other: _____

2. How urgent does this feel to your team right now?

☐

1

1 = No urgency at all

☐

2

☐

3

☐

4

4 = Extremely urgent

3. Has your community already responded — formally or informally — to a recent loss?

- ☐ None
- ☐ Informal response
- ☐ Formal response

4. What concerns are top of mind for your team right now?

SECTION 2 Awareness & Culture

WHAT READINESS LOOKS LIKE

A ready community has at least a baseline comfort discussing suicide and other sudden death openly, without excessive stigma, avoidance, or fear of “saying the wrong thing.” Some members have had prior exposure to related training, so postvention concepts land on familiar ground rather than starting from zero.

5. How comfortable is your community discussing suicide and other sudden death openly?

☐

1

1 = No comfort

☐

2

☐

3

☐

4

☐

5

5 = Completely comfortable

6. How much prior training has your team had in suicide prevention, postvention, or related topics?

☐

None

☐

Limited

☐

Moderate

☐

Extensive

SECTION 3 Infrastructure

WHAT READINESS LOOKS LIKE

A ready organization has, or has had conversations about having, a postvention plan in some form. More importantly, there is a desire and willingness to put in the work to have genuine confidence the plan — once developed or refined — so it will actually be followed when needed. A realistic, honest plan matters more than a polished but untested one. This plan may take the form of a written protocol, or it may live in trusted relationships, cultural protocols, and traditional practices the community already turns to in times of loss — both are valid forms of readiness.

7. Does your organization or community currently have a postvention response plan or a postvention response section included in a broader Emergency or Disaster Plan?

☐ None ☐ Informal ☐ Draft in progress ☐ Formal, adopted plan

8. How confident are you that this plan would actually be followed in a real situation?

☐

1

1 = No confidence in plan

☐

2

☐

3

☐

4

4 = Full confidence in plan

9. Comments regarding any response plan currently in place

SECTION 4 Coordination

WHAT READINESS LOOKS LIKE

A ready community already has, or is actively building, working relationships across the sectors that would need to respond together — schools, behavioral health, first responders, Indian Health Service or tribal health providers, cultural and spiritual leaders, faith communities, and others. Readiness grows out of even a small track record of sectors coordinating successfully, not just an intention to.

10. How would you rate current collaboration across the sectors that would need to respond together?

☐

1

☐

2

☐

3

☐

4

☐

5

1 = No collaboration currently exists

5 = High level of successful collaboration exists

11. Which sectors are currently involved or represented in this conversation?

SECTION 5 Capacity

WHAT READINESS LOOKS LIKE

A ready organization has visible support from leadership — not just verbal endorsement, but a willingness to allocate time, staff, and resources. Barriers such as staffing shortages, competing priorities, or turnover are named honestly rather than glossed over, since unspoken barriers tend to derail plans later. In many Tribal communities, that leadership may include Tribal Council, an Elders Council, and Traditional Healers, alongside program or department leadership.

12. How would you describe leadership support for this work?

☐ None ☐ Somewhat supportive ☐ Strongly supportive

13. What barriers might get in the way (staffing, funding, competing priorities, etc.)?

SECTION 6 Readiness for Action

WHAT READINESS LOOKS LIKE

A ready community can describe, in concrete terms, what it wants out of this process — training, planning, or coordination — rather than a vague hope that “something” will help and states a realistic intention to follow up after an initial training or conversation.

14. What outcome(s) are you hoping for? (Select all that apply.)

- ☐ Training
- ☐ Planning
- ☐ Cross-sector coordination

15. Which best describes where you are right now?

- ☐ Exploring options
- ☐ Ready for training only
- ☐ Ready for full planning

16. How likely is your team to follow up after an initial training or conversation?

☐

1

1 = Unlikely to follow up

☐

2

☐

3

☐

4

4 = Highly likely to follow up

SECTION 7 Strengths

WHAT READINESS LOOKS LIKE

A ready community can identify its own existing strengths — relationships, past successes, committed individuals — without prompting. Naming strengths, not just gaps, signals a foundation to build on and helps NAMI NH tailor the right level of support. Those strengths often include ceremony and traditional practices, Elders and Traditional Healers, kinship networks, and language or cultural revitalization efforts.

17. What existing strengths can this work build on (relationships, past successes, committed individuals, ceremony and traditional practices, Elders, kinship networks, language or cultural revitalization efforts, etc.)?



Scoring Your Assessment

Six items carry a numeric scale and combine into your overall readiness score. The remaining items provide important context for the conversation that follows but are not part of the numeric score.

Section	Scored Item	Scale	Your Score
Motivation	Urgency (Q2)	1–4	
Awareness	Comfort discussing suicide & other sudden death (Q5)	1–5	
Infrastructure	Confidence in plan (Q8)	1–4	
Coordination	Collaboration level (Q10)	1–5	
Capacity	Leadership support (Q12)	1–3 (None = 1, Somewhat = 2, Strong = 3)	
Action	Likelihood of follow-up (Q16)	1–4	
Total Score			

Total Score Range: 6–25

Your total score is a starting point, not a verdict. Use the score bands below, together with the follow-up questions for your score band and the red-flag checklist that follows, to identify the right next step for this community right now.

Score Bands & How NAMI NH Can Help

LOW READINESS · 6–12

- Limited awareness, coordination, and/or leadership support
- Likely not ready for full training and planning

RECOMMENDED APPROACH

- Introductory conversation
- Leadership engagement
- Awareness-focused training only
- Pre-work before a full Connect engagement

How NAMI NH Can Help

NAMI NH can meet you exactly where you are — starting with a no-obligation conversation to understand your community's specific concerns and timeline. We'll help you make the case to leadership, identify a few champions to build momentum, and if you are interested, we can design a light "first touch" (like an awareness session) that builds comfort without overcommitting a team that isn't ready for full planning yet.

MODERATE READINESS · 13–18

- Some infrastructure or motivation already in place
- Gaps remain in coordination or follow-through

RECOMMENDED APPROACH

- Connect Training
- Light planning support
- Focus on building partnerships

How NAMI NH Can Help

NAMI NH can deliver Connect Training tailored to the sectors already at your table, and help you turn early momentum into a working partnership — facilitating introductions across sectors, coaching your team through the planning process, and troubleshooting the specific coordination gaps you've identified so training translates into follow-through.

HIGH READINESS · 19–25

- Strong motivation, leadership, and cross-sector collaboration

RECOMMENDED APPROACH

- Full Connect Training + Planning Model
- Cross-sector engagement
- Implementation and sustainability focus

How NAMI NH Can Help

NAMI NH can serve as your implementation partner from training through launch — co-facilitating cross-sector planning sessions, helping build a realistic implementation roadmap, and staying engaged after training with structured check-ins so your postvention plan is sustained, not just adopted. The first step will be a 2-day Postvention Training and Planning event that brings together key stakeholders in your community who are ready for postvention training, planning, and work. The need for additional Implementation and Follow-up services will be assessed, identified, and provided based on your community's needs.

PART 2

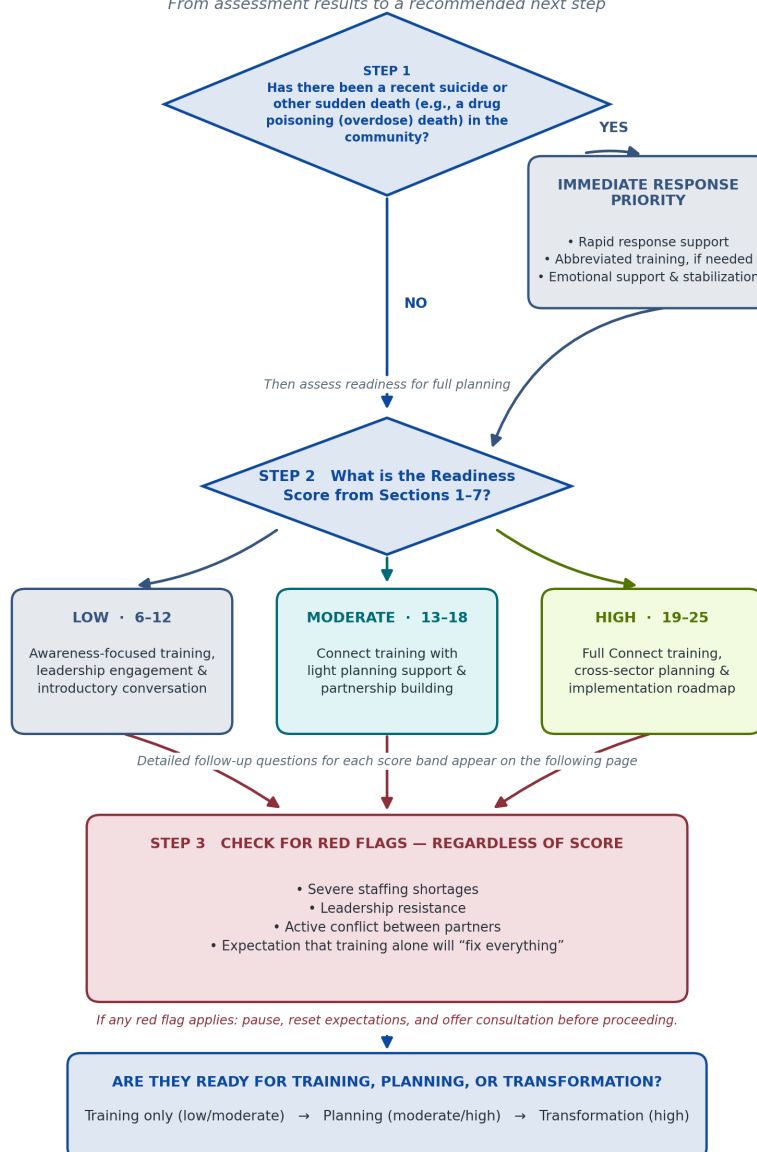
Decision Tree

From your score to a recommended next step

Your total score is a starting point, not a verdict. Use the visual map below, together with the follow-up questions for your score band and the red-flag checklist that follows, to identify the right next step for this community right now. A lower score reflects a different starting point, not a deficiency — many forms of readiness live in relationships and cultural practice as much as in written plans.

Connect Postvention Decision Tree

From assessment results to a recommended next step



Detailed Follow-Up by Score Band

Once you know your score band, ask the follow-up question below to choose the most specific recommendation.

LOW READINESS · 6–12

Ask: Is leadership engaged?

IF NO →

- Leadership briefing
- Introductory session (not full training)
- Delay full implementation

IF YES →

- Awareness-level training
- Build internal champions
- Reassess in 3–6 months

NAMI NH can meet with leadership directly to make the case in language that resonates with their priorities, share what readiness has looked like in comparable communities, and help you build a simple, low-risk starting point that doesn't require full buy-in on day one.

MODERATE READINESS · 13–18

Ask: Are multiple sectors at the table?

IF NO →

- Training + intentional partner recruitment
- Emphasize coalition-building

IF YES →

- Training + structured planning session
- Focus on roles, communication, and coordination

NAMI NH can help identify the specific sectors you're missing and offer recommendations for effective outreach. In NH, NAMI NH can provide consultation time and use our existing relationships with schools, behavioral health, and first responder networks across the state to connect you with key stakeholders in your community.

HIGH READINESS · 19–25

Ask: Is there capacity for follow-through?

IF NO →

- Training + scaled planning (avoid overload)

IF YES →

- Full Connect™ model: training, cross-sector planning, implementation roadmap, and follow-up support

NAMI NH can help right-size the plan to your actual bandwidth — sequencing training and planning in phases, identifying which pieces can be led internally versus co-facilitated by us, so momentum isn't lost to an implementation load the team can't sustain.

RED FLAGS — OVERRIDE THE SCORE IF PRESENT

Regardless of score, pause or adjust the plan if any of the following are present:

- Severe staffing shortages
- Leadership resistance
- Active conflict between partners
- An expectation that training alone will “fix everything”

In these cases: reset expectations and offer consultation first, before committing to a full plan.

THE BIGGER QUESTION

Are they ready for Training, Planning, or Transformation?

Training only — low / moderate readiness

Training & Planning — moderate / high readiness

Transformation (systems change) — high readiness

Ready for Next Steps?

If your results suggest this is the right time to bring Connect™ postvention training or planning to your community, we would love to hear from you. A NAMI NH Connect team member can walk through your results with you and, together, complete a Summary Report to guide next steps.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR A SERVICE QUOTE

Amy Cook, Director of Training

Email: acook@naminh.org

Web: theconnectprogram.org



Thank you for taking the time to think through your community's readiness.