



“Keeping A Spring in Your Step”



March 20 is the vernal equinox, which has always seemed to me a better time for resolutions and change than New Year's. Maybe this is because the first day of spring is really the start of things new — new growth on the trees, new flowers in the yard, new light in the mornings. It's also a great time to look forward at how to build on what you've accomplished during the cold dark days of winter.

And the Boards have accomplished a lot. You had a great January meeting, kicking off a tireless effort of advocacy during the legislative session. I've heard many of you with Angela's weekly teleconferences (especially Art, Brenda, and Mona!). Even when it looked bleak, you stayed passionate and positive. As a result, many of your initial recommendations have remained — or returned — to the proposed budget and we've even seen some new proposals.

You've also had your inaugural workgroup meetings, both of which were dynamic starts to



Our Winter Lance!

some great work. Thanks to all of you who joined in on either the Integration of Behavioral Health and Primary Care workgroup or the Continuum of Care workgroup. We'll be reporting on those groups to the full Boards in May. In the meantime, for those of you feeling left out of all the fun, give me a call — there's plenty to do.

Your Executive Committee has also been working hard. These folks have been a great part of the ongoing work to improve and clarify our working relationship with DHSS, not to mention an amazing resource for me. Each of them has been generous with their energy, humor and insight — working to insure that we all keep our common mission and goals in mind as we do our work.

But now is not the time to rest on your laurels. We have important days ahead. I hope you will continue to make heard the voices of our friends and neighbors in need. Go to the Rally on March 20, motivate your friends and colleagues to spread the message, send an email or write a letter to the editor — capitalize on your momentum!

Have a great Spring, and I'll see you all in Barrow!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Advocates for Denal KidCare to Rally March 20



Advocates for children's health care will rally at the Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center on Thursday, March 20 at noon to spotlight legislation pending in the Alaska Legislature that would give more children access to health care through the state's Denali KidCare Program (DKC). Invited speakers include Mayor Mark Begich.

SB 212, sponsored by Senator Bettye Davis (D-Anchorage), would make health insurance accessible to over 1,200 additional children in Alaska by restoring the maximum eligibility level to the original 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL). When the Alaska legislature authorized DKC in 1999, it provided access to comprehensive health care for low-income children in families earning up to 200% FPL, which is about \$26,500 for a family of four in Alaska. However, in 2004, the legislature changed the maximum eligibility level to a hard-number income limit that froze eligibility at the 2003 level. Over time, this has resulted in children of working families being cut from DKC. By 2007, maximum DKC eligibility fell to 153% FPL. This left an estimated 3,500 children uninsured — children who

would be eligible under the 1999 rules.

During the 2007 session, the legislature partially addressed the problem of access to health care for low-income children by returning maximum DKC eligibility to 175% FPL. This is a step in the right direction, but doesn't fully solve the problem. Thousands of children are still being left out of the program. The job of covering Alaska's kids is not over until DKC is restored to its original eligibility limit of 200% FPL. Because the federal government pays almost 70% of the bill for DKC, the cost to Alaska would only be about \$770,000 per year to insure the health of thousands of Alaska's children.

SB 212 passed the House Health and Social Services Committee on January 28th with support from the majority of committee members. The bill has languished in the Senate Finance Committee since January 30th without a hearing. Join us March 20 in calling on the Alaska legislature to provide for the health of our children.

*The first duty of
love is to
listen.*

Paul Tillich

The National President's Challenge

Fitness is not just a physical activity. It can be a social one, too. People make new friends, have fun, and learn healthy lifestyle habits. The President's Challenge offers programs that are structured yet flexible - all in an effort to make staying active simple and fun.

If you are already active and want a new challenge, the advanced program is for you. The program is for children and adults and runs for six weeks. It begins on March 20 and you can sign up until April 3. You can register to exercise as a group or as an individual.

The website has a list of almost 100 activities for you to choose from including housework, juggling, hang gliding, plus many familiar exercises. Adults are required to exercise for 30 minutes five days a week.

You can download an activity log to keep track of your progress. The form allows you to log exercises as the number of minutes or, using a pedometer,

the number of steps you walk or run.

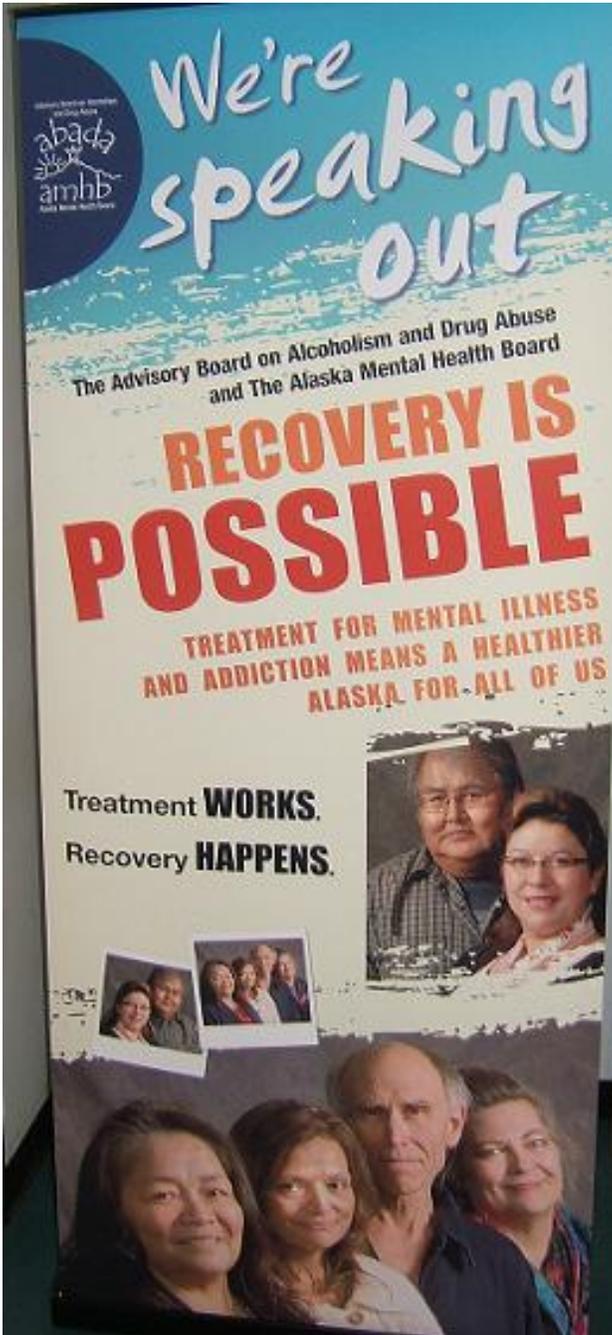
The goal is to see how many points you can earn by being active. You will earn points for every activity you log. Points are based on the amount of energy each activity burns. So the more active you are, the more points you will earn.

The best news is that you can receive a Presidential Champions award based on points earned. The first goal to aim for is a bronze award for anyone who earns 20,000 points. After that is a silver award for 45,000 points and a gold award for 80,000. The website explains how to order your award.

Kate and Connie are doing it –so what are you waiting for?

Go to this website to register and learn more about the about the program. http://www.presidentschallenge.org/the_challenge/index.aspx

ROLL OUT OF OUR NEW PUBLIC RELATIONS TOOLS



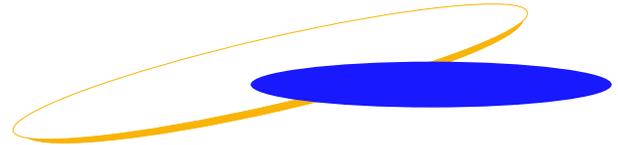
Our New Pop-Up Display

We have been busy producing advertising that tells the public who we are and what we do.

Northwest Strategies of Anchorage produced a pop-up display for the Boards. We can display it in a booth or a space at public gatherings or meetings. It has already been on display at the Annual Legislative Health Fair in February. The display rolls into a case that is compact and easy to carry and it is very easy to set up. So you'll be seeing it where we are presenting to groups.

We also have a new brochure that Marilyn and Connie produced. See it on pages 5 and 6. These handouts can be used whenever you speak to the public. Call or e-mail and we'll send it to you.

These tools are an opportunity to educate the public about the stigma attached to mental health and substance use disorders. Please tell us what you think. We are always open to suggestions for improving our work.



You Know Me...



Each of these individuals lived with a mental illness or substance use disorder of their own or as a family member. They sought help to change their situation. Most became advocates and dedicated their lives to helping others.

Clinical Depression

is an illness that involves the body, mood, and thoughts that cannot simply be willed or wished away.

Bipolar Disorder

is often an illness where people periodically exhibit elevated (manic) and depressive episodes.

Schizophrenia

describes a mental illness characterized by impairments in the perception or expression of reality most commonly manifesting as auditory hallucinations, paranoid or bizarre delusions.

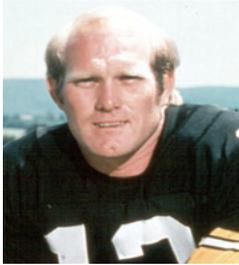
Co-occurring Disorder

a psychiatric or medical disorder co-exists with or occurs in addition to substance use disorder; two or more independent disorders may exist in the same individual.

Substance Use Disorders

complex behavioral disorders characterized by preoccupation with obtaining alcohol or other drugs (AOD) and decreasing healthy social connections; primarily relationships associated with work, family, spirituality and other community involvements.

and did you know...?

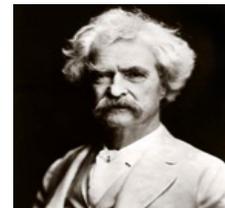


Terry Bradshaw
Charles Dickens
Sir John Paul Getty II
Abraham Lincoln
Sara Silverman

Quarterback Pittsburgh Steelers
19th Century Novelist
Philanthropist
Politician, President
Comedian, Writer, Actress

Sir Winston Churchill
Patty Duke
Mark Twain

British Politician, Prime Minister
Actress
Writer, Lecturer, Satirist



Lionel Aldridge
Alan Alda's
Syd Barrett
John Nash
Brian Wilson

Green Bay Packers
Mother Alan Alda—Advocate
Founder of Pink Floyd
Mathematician; Nobel Prize
Beach Boys

Carrie Fischer
Patty Duke

Actress (Princess Leia), Novelist
Actress



Johnny Cash
Eric Clapton
Betty Ford
Anthony Hopkins
Dennis Hopper
Ann Richards
Florence Nightingale

Country singer
English rock star, guitarist
Founder—Betty Ford Center
Stage, actor, Advocate
Actor, Director, Artist
Politician, Governor of Texas
Founder—modern nursing

2-1-1 Phone Line for Health & Social Services Help



United Way, with help from the Municipality of Anchorage, created Alaska 2-1-1. People can dial the number to connect with resources for anything having to do with health and social services.

The phones are manned by a well trained individuals from Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to

5:00 pm.

Most Alaskans can access the phone line by dialing 2-1-1. Cell phones will work in most areas. If dialing 2-1-1 doesn't work in your area, you can also dial 1-800-478-2221 or go to <http://www.alaska211.org/>

Introduction of "Promoting Older Adult Health"

In spite of illness, in spite even of the archenemy sorrow, one can remain alive long past the usual date of disintegration if one is unafraid of change, insatiable in intellectual curiosity, interested in big things, and happy in a small way.

Edith Wharton

At the dawn of a new millennium, we take stock of where we have been and where we may be going. Not surprisingly, as we move into the 21st century, this nation can anticipate dramatic changes. One of the most significant is the demographics of the American people. By 2030, people over the age of 65 are expected to account for 20 percent of the population, up from 13 percent today. The effect is already being felt in social and health care support systems at the local, state, and federal levels.

We cannot wait for tomorrow to address these changes. Perhaps nowhere is the need for attention more evident than in the areas of substance abuse prevention, addiction treatment, and mental health services. Relatively few people are focused on or aware of the significance of alcohol, medication, and mental health-related problems among older adults. Yet as many as 17 percent of older adults are affected by alcohol and/or prescription drug misuse, and an estimated 20 percent of older adults experience mental disorders that are not a normal part of aging. These problems affect not only the length of life, but also the quality of life.

The good news is that these problems are preventable and treatable. They are perhaps even more responsive to treatment than other chronic illnesses, such as heart disease and diabetes. The bad news is that, like other populations across the age spectrum, older adults are often reluctant to seek assistance from the substance abuse and mental health service delivery systems.

To help bridge the gap between older adults and the mental health and substance abuse services

they may need, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the National Council on the Aging, Inc. (NCOA), sought the advice of service providers and older consumers. They learned that substance abuse and mental health service providers are working successfully with aging services organizations in a number of communities to meet the needs of older people, providing models that can be adopted and adapted in locations across the country.

There is a publication designed to help older adults gain access to needed substance abuse and mental health services by promoting new linkages between well-known, trusted, and heavily utilized providers of aging services and relevant substance abuse and mental health services. By joining these systems, we can more successfully identify older adults who are at risk for problems with alcohol, medication, and mental disorders and connect them with the prevention, education, outreach, and treatment services that can dramatically improve their lives.

The result of the collaboration between SAMHSA and NCOA will be measured in the improved quality of life for countless millions of older Americans, both today and for decades to come.

Go to this website to read the full report. <http://www.ncoa.org/Downloads/PromotingOlderAdultHealth.pdf>

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May is Mental Health Month

**May 8 is National Children's
Mental Health Awareness Day**

**SUICIDE
HURTS**
It doesn't have to happen
**CALL ALASKA'S CARELINE
1-877-266-HELP (4357)**

The Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse (ABADA) and the Alaska Mental Health Board (AMHB) are the state agencies charged with planning and coordinating behavioral health services funded by the State of Alaska. The joint mission of AMHB and ABADA is to advocate for programs and services that promote healthy, independent, productive Alaskans.

Eric Holland, ABADA Chair

Andrea Schmook, AMHB Chair