

Prevention eNotes!



STATE OF ALASKA, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
DIVISION OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

July/Aug 2007

Volume 2, Issue 4

Looking ahead into FY08

Another fiscal year is here, brimming with potential! For DBH Prevention grantees, this is the last year of a 3-year funding award. Many changes occurred over the past three years with a greater emphasis on strategic planning, outcomes vs. outputs, evaluation tools, community readiness, data-based decision-making and performance based funding. While these changes have presented great challenges, they have also offered much growth and opportunity for improved programming, better documentation of program success, and better tools for developing sustainable efforts in each community.

During July-August, the federal Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) performed their tri-annual State Prevention System Review. The review examined the areas of: Leadership; Strategic Planning; State Partnerships and Collaboration; Block Grant Compliance; Workforce Development; Data Enhancement; and Synar. The Review Team was excited about the direction Alaska is moving in terms of behavioral health prevention efforts, specifically commenting on our commitment to outcome measures, partnership and collaborations, grantee training and technical assistance, and the use of data in program decision-making.

Within the next few months DBH Program staff will begin developing the new request for proposals (RFP) for funding in fiscal years 2009-2011. We are committed to expanding and enhancing the efforts of the last three years and building on the progress we have all made in moving prevention in a more logical, defined and measured direction. We will focus on enhanced partnerships and collaborations at the community level; increased efforts to know if “anyone is better off” because of the work we are doing; and a strong commitment to community directed programming.

Prevention program staff are developing plans for FY08 training and technical assistance for grantees—based on the feed-back given to us through conversations and at the Annual Grantee Meeting. The date for our FY08 all grantee meeting is January 9-11, 2008—more to come later. It is going to be a great year! (D. Casto)

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Drug Free Communities Grants

On June 27, 1997, the [Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997](#) became law. The Act is a catalyst for increased citizen participation in efforts to reduce substance use among youth, and it provides community anti-drug coalitions with much-needed funds to carry out their important missions.

The White House [Office of National Drug Control Policy](#) (ONDCP) directs the Drug-Free Communities (DFC) Support Program in partnership with the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#). This anti-drug program provides grants of up to \$100,000 to community coalitions that mobilize their communities to prevent and reduce youth alcohol, tobacco, illicit drug, and inhalant use. The DFC grants support coalitions of youth, parents, media, law enforcement, school officials, faith-based organizations, fraternal organizations, state, local, and tribal government agencies, healthcare professionals, and other community representatives. The DFC Support Program enables coalitions to strengthen their coordination and prevention efforts by encouraging citizen participation in substance use reduction efforts and disseminating information about effective programs.



The Department of Interior's University Leadership Program. Tiered approach to leadership development.

DFC Coalitions at work in Alaska

- ◆ Valdez Youth Awareness Coalition (907/835-8922)
- ◆ Tanana Valley United Way (907/452-7211)
- ◆ Yakutat Tlingit Tribe (907/784-3238)
- ◆ Sitka School District (907/966-1443)
- ◆ United Way of Anchorage (907/263-3800)
- ◆ Boys and Girls Club of Southcentral Alaska (907/770-7385)
- ◆ Bridges Community Resources Network, Inc. (907/398-7738)

Several DFC grants have been awarded to Alaskan communities including Valdez Youth Awareness Coalition, Tanana Valley United Way, Yakutat Tlingit Tribe, Sitka School District, Anchorage United Way and Boys and Girls Club of Southcentral Alaska.

One example of a DFC grant in action is the Bridges Community Resources Network, Inc., a non-profit parent organization of the Community Action Coalition of Kenai. The grant supports the coalition's ability to grow and network among the region including the Kenaitze Indian Tribe, Headstart, preschool programs, area schools, community mental health providers and others. The coalition also reaches out to other communities including a recent partnership with the Valdez Youth Awareness Coalition, another Alaska drug free grantee, in order to share training and facility resources to meet each other's needs. They also have reached out to the Wasilla area youth coalition to share resources and offer information and support. (continued on pg. 3)

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Drug Free Communities Grants....cont.

According to Dale Gillilan, Project Director, the Coalition's motto is "community to community". "We want to help smaller communities that lack the resources necessary for effective coalition building". Gillilan also emphasized that they are helping train other service providers to implement SAMHSA model programs such as the Points of Light youth leadership program, the Strengthening Families program, and the Parenting Wisely program which will start training in the Fall and will be developed with support from area schools. The coalition sent four members to the Community Anti Drug Coalitions of America [CADCA](#) mid-summer training in Tucson, Arizona.

"We want to help smaller communities that lack the resources necessary for effective coalition building".

In order to promote and foster support among smaller coalitions, [DFC Mentor grants](#) are also awarded through a competitive peer review process to community coalitions that wish to mentor other community coalitions that are less developed. There are currently 38 national DFC coalitions receiving a mentor grant. This is a supplemental grant, meaning that an organization must be in receipt of a current DFC grant in order to be eligible to receive a mentor grant. Application information for future funding opportunities will be available on the SAMHSA and ONDCP websites listed here; these sites, as well as the CADCA website are good resource to plan for future coalition development. Promoting partnerships is not only good business practice for non-profits, but also puts communities on the map, which helps to support sustainability in the long term. In Alaska, that means everything. (J.Gallanos)

Drug Courts Receive National Attention:

Alaskans attend National Association Drug Courts Professionals Conference

"People struggling with drug dependence need more than just prison to overcome their addiction,"

~ Senator Lisa Murkowski

Drug courts are much like regular courts except, instead of sentencing non-violent drug offenders to prison, drug court judges instruct them to undergo treatment programs to end their drug abuse and/or dependence. Drug courts are related to a class of programs called therapeutic court programs that offer an alternative to offenders who need a helping hand. These include courts for the mentally ill, struggling families, and youth. What is clear is that drug court programs cost less than prison - drug court averages \$5,000 a year; whereas, a prison term runs between \$25,000 and \$45,000 annually. Furthermore, evaluations of drug court programs have consistently shown that adults who complete the program are less likely to be arrested for another drug related crime than those who serve a prison sentence alone. Health policy advocates and researchers agree; drug courts work and should be established in all eligible communities.

Continued on next page

Drug Courts....Continued from previous page

Community level drug court programs do require a minimum number of services to operate including an active court, access to substance abuse treatment, and local community support. Although Alaska has several functioning drug court programs statewide, not every community that is capable of sustaining a drug court has one.



Senator Lisa Murkowski received an award recognizing her strong support for drug courts during the NADCP annual conference in Washington, D.C. Pictured above, Alaska delegation from left to right: Michael Powell, Claire Waddoup, Senator Lisa Murkowski, James Stanton, and Ronald Taylor.

To address this, the National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP) was established to provide technical assistance and training to encourage the development and success of local drug courts. You can find more information at www.nadcp.org. Most recently, NADCP sponsored an annual conference in Washington, D.C. during the week of June 11th. During the conference, a small group of Alaskans joined over 3,000 professionals including judges, prosecutors, probation officers, police officers and others to share and learn how to start a drug court and how to make existing programs better. In addition to the opportunity to attend a rousing presentation by the star from West Wing, Martin Sheen, the highlight of the week was attending a rally where our very own Senator Lisa Murkowski was recognized by NADCP as a leader for her solid support for drug courts. “People struggling with drug dependence need more than just prison to overcome their addiction,” said Senator Murkowski. “Drug courts’ successful integration of substance abuse treatments, drug testing, sanctions and incentives, and transitional services in a judicially-supervised setting provide communities with an effective, low-cost means of fighting back against the seemingly endless cycle of drug-use, crime, and incarceration.” We were very proud to share the enthusiasm of both the NADCP staff as well as with the Senator and her staff and to personally congratulate her at the NADCP award presentation on Capitol Hill.

The support of our Senators is critical; the original 2008 budget eliminated all designated funding for Drug Courts. Fortunately, the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and Science allocated \$25 million to drug courts, and after convening on June 28, the full Senate Appropriations Committee of which Senator Ted Stevens is an important member, has supported the \$25 million mark! With the support of the delegation from Alaska, we are hopeful that the day will soon come when every person convicted by the court system of a drug related crime and in need of substance abuse treatment and other related support will be offered the option to achieve wellness through a drug court. (M. Powell)

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2007 Red Ribbon Week is coming soon!

Mark your calendars for the week of October 22nd, 2007. That's when the official Red Ribbon Kick-Off Events will happen, marking a week of fun, educational and inspirational activities for communities across the state that are designed to increase awareness of the challenges involved with the use, abuse and addiction of alcohol and other drugs by our youth and adults. Nationally, Red Ribbon Week is celebrated each year during the last week in October. Congress established Red Ribbon Week in 1988 to commemorate the life and work of Enrique "Kiki" Camarena, a Drug Enforcement Administration agent who was murdered in the line of duty in 1985.



October 22nd to 26th, 2007

Believing that one person can make a difference in the fight against drugs and to honor his memory, Camarena's family began to wear red satin badges. Parents, wanting to end the destruction alcohol and other drugs had on their children and families began to form coalitions. Many of these coalitions adopted Camarena as their model and embraced his beliefs and the symbol of his memory, the red ribbon. The National Family Partnership organized the first Nation-wide Red Ribbon Campaign in 1988, thus beginning Red Ribbon Week which has influenced millions of U.S. children.



Pictured above: (From left to right) Campbell Elementary Principal, Shelia Judge Hall; Anchorage School District Superintendent, Carol Comeau; Darin the D.A.R.E. Alaska, Inc. Lion; Freedom Frog from Intervention Helpline, Inc.; Mayor Mark Begich; Assistant Special Agent In Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration, Harvey Goehring. Photo Courtesy of Julie Hasquet, Mayor's Office

This year's Red Ribbon Week Kick-Off Event for Anchorage will take place at Sandlake Elementary on October 22, 2007 (the time is still to be determined). The Sandlake Student Council and The Alaska Red Ribbon Coalition are collaborating to plan a great event. Other communities are planning as well and additional Kick-Off Events and activities will be held around the state during that same time so get involved and keep up on events by visiting the official Alaska Red Ribbon website at www.bgcalaska.org/redribbonweek

For information on statewide activities celebrating September 9, International FASD Awareness and Education Day go to: www.fas.alaska.gov.

July/Aug 2007

Suicide Prevention Week

September 9th -15th, 2007

This year's [American Association of Suicidology \(AAS\)](#), National Suicide Prevention Week's theme is "40 years of Suicide Prevention: Moving Forward with Education and Training" and will coincide with World Suicide Prevention Day on September 10, which is hosted by the [International Association for Suicide Prevention \(IASP\)](#) in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO). Below is a letter from the president of the American Association of Suicidology encouraging everyone to get involved in order to draw attention and awareness to suicide prevention.

Dear Friends,

The goal of Suicide Prevention Week is to globally promote awareness and advocacy about suicide prevention. Significant efforts have been in place for many years to address the problem of suicide, but all those involved recognize that there is much work still to be done. This year's theme, "Moving Forward with Education and Training", acknowledges that efforts are underway and focuses attention on the critical issue of better preparing all those who are in a position to respond to those at risk for suicide. Over 1 million people die by suicide worldwide each year and many more make suicide attempts. Countless family members and friends are also affected each year. The cost of suicide and suicide-related behavior is staggering, both emotionally and financially. Effective suicide prevention demands that those on the "front lines" are equipped with the tools necessary to make the referrals and interventions that can help save lives.

I hope that each and every one of you hears the call to help during this week. I hope that you will make the choice to participate in one or more of the many national and international campaigns or events. Ultimately, though, I hope you'll commit to calling for and working towards making suicide prevention education and training experiences available to all those who can intervene to save lives.

Peter M. Gutierrez, AAS President

Contact the mental health provider, community council, or suicide prevention coalition in your area to see if there are events planned during suicide prevention week. If not, and you are interested in organizing an event for your community, obtain a free media toolkit available on the AAS website at <http://www.suicidology.org/>. Suicide is everyone's business. (J. Gallanos)

[Alaska Statewide Careline](#)



[Statewide Suicide Prevention Council](#)



[Alaska Suicide Related Resources](#)

Research Corner

Research Corner

Utilizing suicide prevention to promote everyday values

In a recent article published by the International Journal of Circumpolar Health, Lisa Wexler and Brenda Goodwin conducted a qualitative study on youth and adult community member beliefs about Inupiat youth suicide and its prevention. A total of 382 surveys were completed in an attempt to better understand community members' perceived causes and possible preventative steps to address the high Inupiat youth suicide rates in Northwest Alaska. What they found were some interesting differences between youth and adults responses.



Adult respondents identified “boredom” as the primary reason for suicide. This—according to adult survey responses — can be addressed through programs offering youth activities, education, and a sense of culture. Taken together, this might mean teaching skin sewing, carving, or other traditional skills, regularly in village communities. In contrast, the majority of young people attribute suicide to “stress”. Young respondents highlighted the need for adults to talk to them about their everyday lives and their futures, in order to receive the guidance and support they need to navigate difficulties that arise.

According to Wexler and Goodwin, differing adult and youth conceptions need to be aligned. Instead of relying on formal youth programs as the means to reach young people, adults need to be encouraged to reach out to them on an everyday basis. Instead of cultural revitalization being primarily about learning traditional skills during a scheduled time, young people need assistance to apply the [Inupiat values](#), skills and practices to their everyday lives. Through on-going exchanges, young people would be encouraged to construct a positive sense of themselves as Inupiat, which can help them create promising futures. In these ways, the priorities and conceptions of youth and adults can be integrated to develop innovative and effective suicide prevention and health promotion strategies.

As more attention is placed on developing sustainable outcomes in the field of prevention, more emphasis will be placed on understanding the values, attitudes and perceptions of the problem we wish to change. As shown in this survey, adults have a different perception than the youth in their community and in turn, will look to different solutions such as building teen centers or developing youth programs to keep them busy. According to the Inupiat youth, they look less to formal programs to help them. They want adults who are already a part of their lives to talk

to them about the stress they are experiencing. Although embracing youth recreation activities and programs are important for overall health, so is fostering the natural connections among community members.

But how can we foster these natural connections and interactions through the use of formal prevention activities? Or more importantly...how can we use prevention principles to *guide* this process?

Continued on next page

Inupiat Values	
Knowledge of Language Knowledge of Family Tree Sharing Humility Respect for Others Love for Children Cooperation Hard Work Respect for Elders	Respect for Nature Avoid Conflict Family Roles Humor Spirituality Domestic Skills Hunter Success Responsibility to Tribe

Suicide Prevention ...Continued from previous page

Such as in the case with Inupiat youth and adults, a survey was used to measure the community's perceptions about teen suicide. It allowed the researchers to learn more about the problems and how community perceptions may contribute to identifying ways in which suicide can be prevented. Mentoring, apprenticeships, and peer programs are just a few evidence-based prevention strategies that support natural connections including social and emotional growth and development in youth. The overall goal being a sustainable, natural, informal helping process by which we can effectively deal with the issues and problems on a local level based on community values. (J. Gallanos).

Yukon Kuskokwim Delta:

Family Spirit Project



Community wellness has been a growing movement in rural Alaska. To support this movement in the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta, Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation (YKHC) has committed a portion of their multi-program grant to support The Family Spirit Project. Sponsors of the project include YKHC, Village Tribal Councils, and DHSS. The project is partially funded by a prevention grant with the Division of Behavioral Health, Prevention and Early Intervention Services. The project is coordinated by Ms. Sophie Jenkins. The Family Spirit Project assists villages in coordinating sub-regional family spirit camps in the Yukon-Kuskokwim region. The focus of the three-day gatherings is to promote community wellness and prevention activities via workshops. Topics include substance abuse, suicide prevention, protecting children from abuse, positive parenting skills, conflict resolution, bullying prevention, community wellness and identifying regional and local resources to keep services and supports for children, youth and families close to home. Ms. Jenkins says that the main idea of the program is to, “inspire hope”.

Prior to planning the event, Ms. Jenkins speaks to local elders, teachers, community and tribal representatives to identify what issues or problems the village is interested in or ready to address. Following the initial meeting, she works with the community to complete both community readiness and needs assessments. The gatherings are usually held in the spring. Each year, three villages are selected from the region to receive technical assistance in planning a spirit camp. Last year, gatherings were held in Aniak, Marshal and the city of St. Mary's. 75 adults and more than 100 children participated at each site. In addition to the educational presentations, some fun activities such as Karaoke, Game Night (which included board games and other activities), dances, and music are provided. After the gathering is over, Ms. Jenkins completes an evaluation or “follow up” to see how well the event was able to impact or improve community wellness and also to identify future needs or resources for each village. Each village is provided technical assistance the following year to coordinate their own Family Spirit Camp. If you would like more information about the Family Spirit Project, please contact Michael Powell at DHSS at 264-0721 or Sophie Jenkins with YKHC at 543-6711. (M. Powell)

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Rural Providers Conference

Copper Center, Alaska 2007

The Rural Providers' Conference (RPC) is an annual gathering of substance abuse service providers, youth, elders and family members interested in celebrating and encouraging the continual growth of the Alaska Native Sobriety Movement. The RPC embraces and unites traditional Alaska Native knowledge and modern treatment methods in the battle against alcohol and other drug abuse as well as the many associated challenges. This year's Rural Providers' Conference (RPC) was held in Copper Center's Kluti-Kaah Memorial Hall, with the theme of "Healthy Families, Healthy Communities," co-hosted by the Copper River Native Association and RurAL CAP.

Some of the highlights of this year's RPC were inspirational speeches by prominent Alaska Native leaders Don Kashevaroff, Robert Charlie, Wilson Justin of Mt. Sanford Tribal Consortium, and Donald Johns of CRNA. The conference featured ceremonies, talking circles and cultural events such as an Ahtna Athabascan potluck that was held at the Klutina River Culture Camp and included salmon, moose, and fry bread along with plenty of dancing and singing of traditional songs.



DBH prevention staff Tony Piper and James Gallanos were invited to the Hudson Lake Recovery Camp, a remote substance abuse treatment program designed to provide culturally centered drug and alcohol treatment that includes subsistence activities, traditional healing as well as other road to recovery models. Tony and James join Leslie Bennett and Elder Marco Pete.

RurAL Cap



CRNA
Copper River Native Association

The many workshops were geared toward clinicians working with rural Alaskans, those in recovery, as well as elders, youth and anyone else with an interest in community wellness. The conference presented an opportunity to learn about a wide range of topics designed to address the most challenging issues Native Alaskans face today such as drug and alcohol abuse, domestic violence and sexual abuse, suicide, and HIV/AIDS. Some of the workshops focused on sharing helpful information on tobacco cessation techniques, traditional and holistic healing, and overviews of prevention programs from around the state.

A wonderful discussion addressing suicide prevention was held during a lunch session that ended with a commitment from participants to continue the work started at the conference to increase community wellness and resiliency. Next year, the Rural Providers' Conference will be held again in Copper Center the week of June 2-6, 2008. Mark your calendars! (T. Piper)

Partners in Prevention - Spotlight on Youth



Students from the Natural Helpers groups in Alakanuk, Emmonak, Hooper Bay, Kotlik, Marshall, Mountain Village, Pilot Station, Russian Mission, Scammon Bay and Sheldon's Point.

The Natural Helpers from the Lower Yukon School District are specially trained students who help prevent suicide and promote wellness in their villages. When the program started five years ago, there were numerous youth suicides in their region, every year. Because of the Natural Helpers there were 145 suicide interventions in 2006 (and one suicide). There are Natural Helper groups at ten village sites along the Yukon River. Each site has two student leaders and they get together every month to decide what prevention activities should be done. Since its beginnings, the group has expanded beyond suicide prevention program to other wellness activities. Natural Helpers also organize alcohol/drug-free events, perform community service work and assist in lunch or recess duty. In one village, three people drowned in one summer, so the students decided to teach a water safety course. Besides being inspirational teachers and helpers, the students are also wonderful role models for the younger children. In March the group was honored with the Spirit of Youth, Life Savers and Prevention annual award.

To nominate a youth group or teenager that is organizing prevention activities in your community, go to:

www.spiritofyouth.org

Save the date



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Schedule of Events

- [9/1—ASCA mini-grant apps due](#)
- 9/9 —International FASD Awareness Day
- 9/10—World Suicide Prevention Day
- 9/10 AASG applications due
- [9/11-15—Suicide Prevention Week](#)
- [9/16-19—20th Annual NPN Research Conference in Portland, OR](#)
- 10/11—AASG, RSVP training East Anchorage High School
- [10/22-26 —Red Ribbon Week](#)
- 12/3-5 —Alaska Health Summit: Making Alaska Healthy: Individuals, Communities, Policies and Environment
- 12/10-11—DARE Alaska Student Safety Summit in Anchorage

- ◆ **ASCA mini-grant applications due** on September 1st. see article in May/June issue of e-Notes.
- ◆ **American Association for Student Government** statewide training for RSVP applications due September 10 to be held on October 11 at East Anchorage High School. The AASG Fall Leadership Conference will begin after the RSVP training, and schools are encouraged to take advantage of both opportunities. Schools will get the training, RSVP manuals, and follow-up support, and may be eligible for funding and travel scholarships. Application is available at www.aasg.org. For more information, contact Carol Waters at 346-3148 or ma2tna@acsalaska.net.
- ◆ **NPN Research Conference** on September 16-19th in Portland, OR: Moving Prevention Upstream—Navigating the Challenges of Research to Practice. You will have the opportunity to learn from practitioners and researchers from around the country who are using research as a guide for prevention programming.
- ◆ **Alaska Health Summit 2007** Alaska's largest gathering of health care providers. This year's theme is Making Alaska Healthy: Individuals, Communities, Policies and Environment. The purpose of the Summit is to provide educational opportunities to health care providers, public health practitioners, behavioral health providers, prevention specialist, policy makers and legislators on current topics of interest that influence the health of all Alaskans. For information go to <http://www.alaskapublichealth.org/summit.shtml>.
- ◆ **Alaska Student Safety Summit** hosted by D.A.R.E. Alaska, Inc. on December 10 – 11, 2007 at the Hotel Captain Cook. This conference is a vital step in our continuing efforts to prevent school violence, youth violence and drug abuse in our communities throughout Alaska. Over the last few years school violence has increased dramatically. According to the Alaska State Troopers Annual Report (2005), "The greatest contributing factor to violent crimes, which includes domestic violence and sexual assault, is alcohol and drug abuse." There is a direct correlation between juvenile crimes and drug use. With a decrease in positive role models, we are seeing an alarming increase in violence in our schools, both in Alaska and nationally. This first ever **Alaska Student Safety Summit** will bring stakeholders together from law enforcement, the schools, community-based organizations, health and human services, and prevention experts from across the nation to tackle this increasing threat to Alaskan children. Your attendance and support of the **Alaska Student Safety Summit** is critical to ensuring that we reach our vision of Healthy Kids in Healthy Communities. Please contact Naomi Sweetman at 907-245-4582 for more information about the Summit.

This issues quote...

"Aim for success, not perfection. Never give up your right to be wrong, because then you will lose the ability to learn new things and move forward with your life."

~Dr. David M. Burns

Additional Resources

- ◆ The American Indian/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian Resource Kit on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders. Copies may be obtained, free of charge by calling SAMHSA's Health Information Network at 1-877-726-4727 (Inventory # SMA07-4264).
- ◆ Alaska Behavioral Health Resource Guide, July 2007. Developed and published by the Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse and the Alaska Mental Health Board. Copies can be downloaded at <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/abada/pdf/resourceguide2007.pdf>.
- ◆ Making it Work: Behavioral Health in Alaska. The 2007-2010 State Plan for the Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse and the Alaska Mental Health Board. Copies can be downloaded at http://www.hss.state.ak.us/abada/pdf/making_it_work073007.pdf.

"Partners Promoting Healthy Communities"

Prevention eNotes is a publication of
DHSS, Division of Behavioral Health
Prevention and Early Intervention Staff
L. Diane Casto, Manager
877-393-2287
www.hss.state.ak.us/dbh/prevention/



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