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first thoughts

Welcome to our 2nd issue

As we produce this edition of our electronic newsletter, the winter season has come in with a definite temperature change. As the temps change, so do the faces in the DBH staff. It is with great sadness that we say goodbye to our colleague and great friend, Benjamin Shier. He began working as an intern while a high school senior with the Office of FAS in 2001 and stayed with us as he has been working towards his degree in information systems at UAS. Now he will be going to Department of Environmental Conservation as an Analyst Programmer. We wish him the best of luck in his new career move.

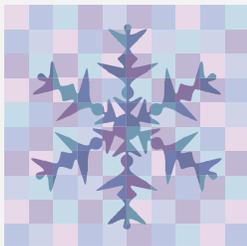
It is with great pleasure that we welcome Marlene Adams to our staff as our CSAP Fellow. Marlene brings a lot of experience in the prevention area and her perspective as an Alaskan Native. We are very fortunate to have someone with her background and her positive and humorous outlook on life.

We had a hard time limiting the ideas and articles sent in for this issue. We hope you find something of value and we welcome your feedback and suggestions. Happy holidays and please stay safe out there.

points of interest

Benjamin Shier Leaving DBH

Well, the end of my time here at the Division of Behavioral Health has arrived. I have accepted a new job with the State and will be moving on. This ends over five years I have spent here at the Division supporting grantees and other various projects. I wanted to take a moment and say goodbye to you all and let you know how much I have enjoyed working with many of you. You all do great work for your communities, and playing the small roll of technical assistance for many of you on the quarterly reports was a real privilege. Good luck on the future of your projects, and know that the good people here in the Prevention and Early Intervention Section will continue to be here with the knowledge and expertise to assist you in making your program a success. Keep up the good work.





*Every single person has
innate mental health,
innate resiliency, innate
common sense. That is
the core of their being,
that is what we need to
connect with.
~Bonnie Bernard*

DBH Welcomes CSAP Prevention Fellow

The Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), a program of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration has established the first National Prevention Fellowship Program. The Fellowship program goal is to provide comprehensive training, professional development and participation in the implementation of the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) concept as it relates to Alaska's Prevention programs. Training will include prevention planning, coalition building support, program development and becoming familiar with the SPF Prevention model.

Marlene Adams has been selected as Alaska's CSAP Prevention Fellow. Marlene is a life-long resident of Alaska and has nearly 20 years work experience in working with rural and urban programs across the State of Alaska. Marlene has trained the Alaska Substance Abuse Prevention Specialist Training (ASAPST) to rural and urban Prevention Specialists. She has co-facilitated Cultural Competency trainings service providers who wanted tools to implement prevention services in a culturally competent manner. Marlene will work with a DBH mentor, Tony Piper, Associate Coordinator, to successfully complete this fellowship.

DBH Video Lending Library

The Division of Behavioral Health has recently put together a list of videos that are available to the public to check out. The library contains over 900 videos on subjects relating to FAS, Substance Abuse, Recovery, and other related topics, and can be browsed on our website at <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dbh/resources/dbhLibrary/default.htm>. If you wish to check out a video on a two week loan, please email the Division at DBHLibrary@health.state.ak.us, or call us at (907) 465-3370 in Juneau or toll free at (800) 465-4828. More information is available on the web.

Signs of Suicide (SOS) Curriculum Available

The Statewide Suicide Prevention Council and the Division of Behavioral Health are working in partnership on the *Signs of Suicide (SOS) Curriculum Pilot Project*. Through a Request for Letters of Interest (RFLIO) we are soliciting schools/school districts to participate in our *Signs of Suicide (SOS) Curriculum Pilot Project* to introduce and utilize this school-based curriculum on suicide prevention. There are no funds available but successful applicants will be given one of 10 SOS curricula packages, plus TA and updates as available. There are 5 curricula for middle school and 5 for high school. The SOS project is a school-based program so schools must be the applicant, either by themselves or in partnership with a community agency. Participants will be asked to submit data to assist in determining the usefulness and success of this model in diverse school settings. For a copy of the Request for Letters of Interest go to Alaska Public Notices at <http://notes4.state.ak.us/pn>. Once there, click on Departments, go to DHSS and then click on Procurement. The RFLIO was released on October 27 and the due date for Letters of Interest is Friday, December 1.



Prime 4 Life

During the week of September 25th, Sitka Alaska hosted another successful PRIME for Life, 4-day, New Instructors training. Over 35 providers in attendance from all around the state. PRIME for Life is the only state approved curriculum for those 21 years of age and younger who are in need of a Substance Abuse educational intervention that an Alcohol/Drug Information School (ADIS) provides. The ADIS programs provide education to first-time Driving Under the Influence (DUI) offenders, Minor Consuming Alcohol (MCA) or Minor In Possession (MIP) offenders, as well as those offenders that are convicted of alcohol and/or other drug related misdemeanors and do not fit criteria for a treatment program. The PRIME for Life curriculum is also being used in school districts and Juvenile Justice Facilities around the state.

PRIME For Life is program designed to gently but powerfully challenge common beliefs and attitudes that directly contribute to high-risk alcohol and drug use. The content, process and sequence of PRIME For Life were carefully developed to achieve both prevention and intervention goals in a culturally sensitive manner. The program goals are: to reduce problems caused by high-risk drinking or drug use; to reduce the risk for long-term health problems and short-term impairment problems; and to help people successfully protect the things they value.

These 35 instructors will now join the other 150 or so that have already been trained in Alaska. For more information about PRIME for Life visit their website at: www.askpri.org . For questions on the ADIS program contact: Anthony Piper at: apiper@health.state.ak.us

Alaska Health Summit, Dec. 4-6

The theme of this year's Alaska Health Summit is "The Value of the Public's Health" and will have a strong focus on both preventive primary health, as well as behavioral health issues. The Summit is scheduled for December 4-6 at the Sheraton in Anchorage and I would encourage everyone to review the information about this great training opportunity.

A number of behavioral health issues will be highlighted including suicide prevention, youth resiliency, the cost of substance abuse in Alaska and the savings of prevention, community planning and readiness, and others are included in this 3-day agenda.

You can view the full agenda and/or register by visiting <http://www.alaskapublichealth.org/summit.shtml>. Please share this information with other individuals or agencies you think would be interested.

Rural Behavioral Health Conference 2007 Call for Papers

For those interested in presenting at the upcoming Rural Behavioral Health Conference, please fill out the Call for Presentations Worksheet found at <http://www.codi-ak.org/AboutCoDI.html> . E-mail the worksheet and attachments to debis@codi-ak.org or fax to 907-745-4897. **Deadline for submission** is January 12th, 2006.



Hot Topics

What is Resiliency?

Resiliency is the ability to “bounce-back” and successfully overcome life challenges and problems. People who are resilient receive emotional support from friends and family (a quality known as “connectedness”) and possess the life skills and social competencies to make positive choices and maintain healthy relationships. Resilience is gained through meaningful engagement in school, community, and family.

Emotional Support exists when we feel close to, bonded, attached to, or supported by people or organizations. This can also be referenced as “connectedness”.

Life Skills and Social Competencies are found when youth develop abilities to make positive choices, maintain healthy relationships, and succeed in life.

Life Skills include the ability to problem solve, make healthy decisions, manage stress, and do critical thinking. (Other non-health disciplines define life skills as having: employment skills, technology skills and budgeting skills.)

Social Competencies include abilities to communicate, resolve conflict, empathize, show resistance, and be culturally knowledgeable.

Meaningful Engagement includes time spent volunteering, helping others, working for causes you believe in, and having purpose in life. Programs can increase meaningful engagement in youth development when teens are involved in all phases of planning, organizing and evaluation.

Research has proven that resiliency increases the ability for youth to resist negative behaviors such as substance abuse and suicidal ideation. Resiliency can be measured by the degree to which youth are supported/ connected, meaningfully engaged, and possess the necessary life skills and social competencies to maintain their health and wellness.

Methods for measuring resiliency will be discussed in the next Prevention e-Notes.

While Spirit of Youth accepts nominations and recognizes youth all year, for this year's annual awards, please submit nominations by December 15 to: www.spiritofyouth.org

community corner

Project Highlight – Statewide service, Spirit of Youth (SOY)

Spirit of Youth is dedicated to creating, promoting, and recognizing youth involvement in communities across Alaska. SOY began in 1997 as a media project to address the growing negative image of teenagers. Since then, through partnerships with over 30 media outlets statewide, more than 600 stories promoting Alaska's youth have been highlighted in newspapers, newsletters, and through radio and television. This prevention program is an environmental approach strategy with short-term outcomes of increasing statewide awareness & perception of Alaska's youth who are making positive contributions, achievements, and healthy development towards becoming productive members of our state.

When awareness of youth as contributing members is increased, youth are more likely to be accepted, hired, involved in, and supported to live a healthy and meaningful life. Research has proven that youth who feel supported and connected to adults, organizations, and their communities have more resiliency, developing their ability to abstain from negative behaviors like substance abuse, early school drop out, violence, and suicidal ideation. Evaluation of this program occurs through a telephone survey of random adults in selected communities. Results from this survey show an increasing number of adults who have seen positive news about teenagers - 56% (2004) compared to 68% (2006); 80% of adults surveyed believe "there are not enough positive news stories about youth"; and among the surveyed adults, perceptions of teenagers have improved statistically over time (perceptions of youth as responsible, helpful, and as volunteers). Additionally, adults who have heard positive news stories about youth, compared to those that haven't are significantly more likely to report positive perceptions. For further details on SOY's evaluation, visit their website.

Nominations for the youth media campaign are made throughout the year by anyone who wishes to recognize a teen (ages 12-19) or a teen group who you believe is making or has made a positive difference. Nominations can be faxed or made online at www.spiritofyouth.org. The teen action council reviews and recommends those stories deserving special media attention in the following categories:

- Cultural activities
- Participation in government or business
- Lifesaver (crisis response) & prevention
- Service (to children, peers, or community)
- Fine Arts (dance, theater, music, art)
- Overcoming challenges
- Technology & media
- Faith-based service
- Science & environmental effort

This program is a principles-based model, developed by Alaska teens and adults. The Division of Behavioral Health is a grantor and very proud to support these efforts.

FAScinating Families Camp this February

ALASKANS: Are you raising kids who were exposed to alcohol before they were born? You don't have to do it alone!

Join other families at the FAScinating Families Camp, February 16th – 19th, 2007 at the Solid Rock Bible Camp in Soldotna. For information, contact Pat Cochran at Volunteers of America, (907) 279-9646, or voa-Allstars@voaak.org



this issue's quote

Spirit of Youth – the impact

A family came to see their son get the science and environment award at the annual banquet. The father noted "I never understood my son and why he was so interested in environmental issues and not other things; I wanted him to be involved in sports. Now I KNOW, I saw the passion in his eyes, and could hear the pride in his voice when he talked about what he had done – this helped me to understand my son so much, THANKYOU!"



"Partners Promoting Healthy Communities"

Prevention eNotes is a publication of

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