

## **Water, Water, So Good For Me...**

A new statewide social marketing campaign is letting parents know that water is an important nutrient for children's health. The State of Alaska WIC Program, the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Alaska Dental Action Coalition, the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium and the Alaska Commercial Company have partnered together to develop a campaign to encourage parents of young children to give their children water instead of sugary drinks.

Evon Zerbetz, a Ketchikan artist known for her illustration of Alaskan children's books, designed the new poster, "Water, Water So Good For Me". This colorful poster shows children from a variety of Alaskan cultures drinking water from a variety of sources. Hopefully this work of art and its simple nutrition message will catch the attention of parents.

The campaign grew out of the deep concern that many health and education agencies and individuals share about the growing problem of soda pop consumption in Alaska, especially among young people. Large intakes of soda pop and other sugar beverages are contributing to increasing dental caries, obesity and diabetes in Alaska's children. Parents and caregivers need to know that water is the best beverage choice to prevent tooth decay and promote good health in our children.

This public education campaign will also include information on the new guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics which states that children ages 1 to 6 should have no more than 4 - 6 ounces of 100% fruit juice per day and 16 ounces of milk. After a child has consumed the recommended amount of juice and milk, parents and caregivers should offer plain water, instead of sweet, high-calorie drinks, such as soda pop, Kool-Aid, Gatorade, and Tang.

For more information about this program and copies of materials, please contact Janelle Gomez, State of Alaska WIC Program, [janelle\\_gomez@health.state.ak.us](mailto:janelle_gomez@health.state.ak.us), (907) 269-2446.