

Abuse Prevention and Intervention

Definition

Abuse includes physical and psychological abuse, neglect, domestic violence, sexual assault, child sexual abuse, abandonment, and financial exploitation. This plan refers to the systems in place to prevent and reduce the frequency of abuse as well as the systems in place to provide services and supports after abuse has occurred.

Rationale

Reducing abuse promotes the dignity and value of every Alaskan and promotes respect for ourselves and for others. It sends a strong message of hope and healing to victims and survivors and strengthens communities (Parnell, 2012).



- Alaskans with disabilities are twice as likely to report fearing for their safety or being physically hurt by an intimate partner in the last five years (DHSS, 2011).
- Alaskans with disabilities are twice as likely to report they have been made to take part in unwanted sexual activity (DHSS, 2011).
- Individuals with disabilities are more than twice as likely to be the victim of violent crime (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2012).
- Only 41% of individuals experiencing disabilities report their victimization to the police in 2010, compared to 53% for those without disabilities (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2012).
- Children with three or more adverse childhood experiences (including verbal, physical, or sexual abuse; family dysfunction such as incarcerated, mentally ill, or substance-abusing family member; domestic violence; or absent parent) are nearly four times more likely to have developmental delays (Harvard University Center on the Developing Child, n.d.).

- Risk of assault or sexual assault for an adult experiencing a developmental disability is 4-10 times higher than for those who do not experience a developmental disability (Sobsey, Wells, Lucardie, & Mansell, 1995).
- Individuals experiencing disabilities are more likely to be victimized by someone they know (67% of victims with disabilities compared to 59% of victims without disabilities) (Hughes, 2003).

Vision

Alaskans with disabilities have access to culturally competent integrated support systems to prevent violence and abuse, and to promote recovery and healing when abuse has occurred.

Access

ACTION STEPS

- 1.1.1 The Alaska Health and Disability Program (AHDP), in partnership with the Disability Law Center, Northwest ADA Center, and Independent Living Network, will distribute information and promote the use of resources on **communication and information accessibility** of abuse prevention and victim related services.
- 1.1.2 The AHDP, in partnership with the Disability Law Center, Northwest ADA Center, and Independent Living Network, will distribute information and promote the use of resources on **built environment accessibility** of abuse prevention and victim related services.
- 1.1.3 The AHDP, in partnership with the Disability Law Center, Northwest ADA Center, and Independent Living Network, will distribute information and promote the use of resources on **staff training, policies, and accommodations on accessibility** of abuse prevention and victim related services.

Data/Surveillance

ACTION STEPS

- 1.2.1 The Division of Public Health Section of Chronic Disease Prevention and

Health Promotion (DPH CDPHP) will add standardized questions, according to federal guidance to identify respondents experiencing a disability to the 2015 and future Alaska Youth Behavior Risk Survey to identify issues affecting youth who experience disabilities.

- 1.2.2 The AHDP will utilize data to identify and prioritize abuse disparities among Alaskans with disabilities and disseminate information in annual reporting to stakeholders.
- 1.2.3 The AHDP recommends the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, and Adult Protective Services improve the collection of quality population-based data related to abuse prevention and intervention involving Alaskans with disabilities and distribute reports to AHDP annually or upon request.

Education/Awareness

ACTION STEPS

- 1.3.1 The UAA Center for Human Development (UAA CHD) will utilize a train-the-trainer model to promote evidence-based education for youth and adults with disabilities (and their families and caregivers) about healthy relationships, boundaries, safety and rights, such as the Friendships and Dating Program, to providers at least annually.
- 1.3.2 The AHDP and the UAA CHD will promote educational opportunities for **medical and social service professionals** about delivering abuse and victim services to people with disabilities.
- 1.3.3 The AHDP will promote educational opportunities **for legal and law enforcement professionals** about providing abuse and victim services to people with disabilities.
- 1.3.4 Abuse prevention and intervention agencies (e.g., the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault , and their members) will work with the AHDP and the Independent Living Network to ensure that media campaigns and resources about abuse and violence prevention are accessible and inclusive of people with disabilities through the use of diverse images of

persons with disabilities, person-first language, varied literacy levels, and alternate formats.

- 1.3.5 The AHDP will collaborate with the Anchorage Police Department (APD) Crisis Intervention Team and subject matter experts to pilot at least three video-based education sessions for first responders to promote awareness of, and effective interaction with, Alaskans with disabilities.
- 1.3.6 The AHDP will partner with the Independent Living Network and the Alaska Police Standards Council to disseminate the three video-based education sessions piloted with APD to first responders throughout Alaska, including online availability.
- 1.3.7 The AHDP will facilitate the identification of appropriate guest speakers or panel members with disabilities (or care for family members with disabilities) as requested for organizations or trainings integrating disability awareness into their programs.
- 1.3.8 The AHDP, UAA CHD, and Independent Living Network will distribute accessible information about developing healthy relationships, recognizing abusive relationships, and resources for help if violence or abuse has occurred.

Collaboration

ACTION STEPS

- 1.4.1 The AHDP, Independent Living Network, and Disability Law Center will assist ANDVSA in promoting a model on inclusion that programs such as victims' rights and criminal justice systems can use to review their own strategic or work plans to integrate abuse prevention and victim services for people with disabilities.
- 1.4.2 The AHDP and the Independent Living Network will promote the recommendations and activities of current initiatives to prevent domestic violence and encourage the inclusion of materials, recommendations, and activities applicable to people with disabilities.
- 1.4.3 The AHDP will advocate for the participation of individuals with disabilities and families in abuse and violence related state and local

advisory groups by meeting with Boards and Commissions staff of the Governor's Office.

- 1.4.4 The Independent Living Network, Disability Law Center, and UAA CHD will support the establishment of Disability Abuse Response Team (DART) in at least two additional communities across Alaska through advocacy and leveraging of available resources. A DART team brings different agencies together to provide a unified support response to victims of violence and help prevent people with disabilities from falling through the cracks when they have been victimized (UAA CHD, n.d.).
- 1.4.5 The AHDP recommends that the Office of Children's Services continue to implement the evidence-based Strengthening Families programs to promote family resiliency to reduce the frequency and impact of adverse childhood experiences.
- 1.4.6 The AHDP recommends that the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development, Anchorage School District, and Division of Behavioral Health, with the support of disability and abuse intervention support organizations, advocate for the district-wide implementation of trauma-sensitive schools in the Anchorage and at least one additional school district to increase resiliency and reduce the impact of adverse childhood experiences.
- 1.4.7 The Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education (GCDSE) will replicate the Alaska Safety Planning and Empowerment Network community needs assessment and systems change education process in one Alaska community annually.
- 1.4.8 The AHDP recommends that the Autism Society of Alaska and the GCDSE collaborate to provide the Anchorage Police Department Search Team a white paper outlining recommendations regarding available tracking technologies and sustainable funding sources to address the needs of individuals with disabilities experiencing wandering behaviors. Currently Anchorage Police Department Search Team manages Project Lifesaver, a radio frequency tracking system to locate and return wandering adults and children to families and caregivers (www.apdst.org/project_lifesaver).