

Primary Prevention of Intimate Partner Violence and Promoting Healthy Relationships

Almost 75% of Alaskans have experienced or know someone that has experienced domestic violence or sexual assault.

In a public opinion survey conducted by ANDVSA in 2006 over one in ten Alaskan youth self-identified experiencing physical intimate partner violence in the previous 12 months. This exceeds the national average.

Teens in violent relationships (both victims and perpetrators) may use substances more frequently, consider suicide, and be negatively impacting their ability to succeed in school. The stress that youth feel may lead to eating disorders and depression.

Intimate Partner Violence and teen dating violence is preventable. Work is being done by the Center for Disease Control and others to understand the development of intimate partner violence. To prevent intimate partner violence we focus on stopping first time perpetration and first time victimization; we promote safe, respectful, and healthy relationships.

How can you prevent violence from initially occurring?

When considering primary prevention efforts, consider how you can work comprehensively with other primary prevention partners of substance abuse, suicide prevention, etc. There are many shared risk factors. Work in collaboration with community members to promote healthy relationships early, in the schools, after school, in faith organizations, and with key influencers such as older peers and coaches. Help to establish community-wide expectations of respectful and nonviolent relationships. Men are important partners in these efforts.

Reduce risk factors for youth (e.g. substance abuse, low self-esteem, poor anger management and coping skills).

Many protective factors (that are likely to protect youth from violence in dating relationships) will also prevent other types of health related issues (refer to CDC website). Consider how you can work most effectively with partners to promote protective factors such as communication skills, building developmental assets, emotional literacy, linking to caring adults, self-confidence, youth leadership opportunities etc. It is important for youth to understand what a healthy relationship looks like (see links below).

Provide community wide promotion efforts that promote respect, healthy relationships, and positive male and female models.

In Alaska, several communities are working to change knowledge, attitudes and behaviors of community members towards intimate partner violence (IPV). Communities are promoting healthy relationships through peer education, community campaigns, in-classroom education and other comprehensive approaches. For example, the CDC funded Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement and Leadership Through Alliances (DELTA) program, seeks to reduce the incidence (i.e., number of new cases) of IPV in 4 funded communities. The program works comprehensively with prevention partners to develop community wide prevention plans that address IPV with the individual, their influencers, their communities (schools, faith organizations, sports teams), and macro level policies.

The DELTA program, through the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, is working with an interdisciplinary steering committee from across Alaska to plan for, coordinate, and evaluate IPV prevention efforts.

Ask yourself:

Are there IPV prevention efforts (before partner violence occurs) in place in your community? If so, what are they?

What partners are hoping to work comprehensively and achieve the same goals?

What kinds of programs or services would you like to see in your community?

Websites to explore:

CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/DatingAbuseFactSheet.pdf>

Campaigns and Messaging:

Choose respect: <http://www.chooserespect.org/scripts/index.asp>

My Strength Campaign: <http://www.mencanstoprape.org/info-url2696/info-url.htm>

White Ribbon Campaign: http://www.whiteribbon.ca/about_us/

Coaching boys into Men:

<http://fvpfstore.stores.yahoo.net/coaching-boys-into-men-playbook.html>

http://endabuse.org/programs/publiceducation/files/CBIMbrochure_revised.pdf

Curricula:

Safe dates: http://www.pubinfo.vcu.edu/vabp/program_details.asp?id=97

The Fourth R: <http://youthrelationships.org/>

To learn more about DELTA or exchange information on ipv prevention primary prevention efforts contact lgrassgreen@andvsa.org